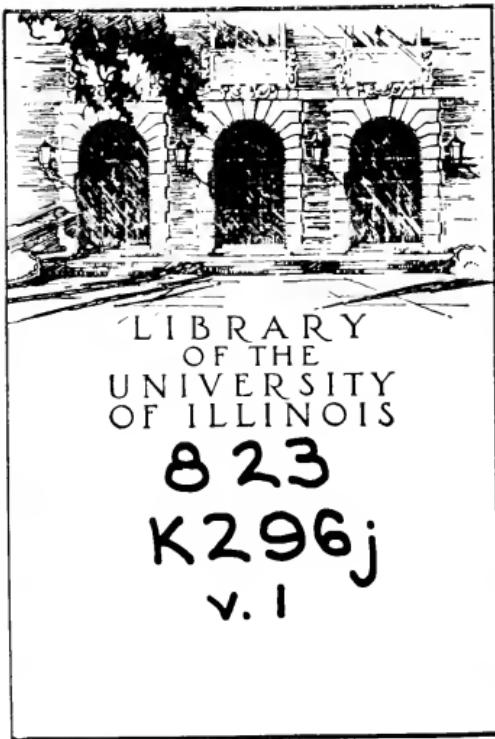


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JANE DE DUNSTANVILLE;

OR,

Characters as they are.

A NOVEL

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ISABELLA KELLY,

AUTHOR OF MADELINE, ABBEY ST. ASAPH, AVONDALE PRIORY,
JOSCELINA, EVA, RUTHINGLENNE, MODERN INCIDENT,
BARON'S DAUGHTER, SECRET, LITERARY INFORMA-
TION, FRENCH GRAMMAR, POEMS, &c. &c.

VOL. I.

“I do not make heads, I only make caps.”

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1813.



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TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

MADAM,

THAT your Royal Highness has graciously sanctioned the following pages, displays a peculiar excellency, and gives bright evidence of a superior nature ; for, with a grace and beneficence all your own, you, Madam, benignly allow the stranger's claim, and with royal condescension, like the Great Creator himself, raise the humble of heart to the blessings of hope.

So feeble a pen as mine cannot delineate the sentiment such benignity inspires ; but, even were language exhausted, it could never say, what every pure British bosom feels the Princess of Wales to be. May, then, the warm accents of gratitude and reverence blend with the general hymn of national praise, which, reaching from

earth to heaven, gives richer harmony to that sphere which, when your royal graces shall no longer irradiate the world, kindred angels will prepare for your virtues, in the realms of never-ending glory.

*With the highest consideration,
and most perfect deference, deign, Madam,
your permission, that I remain,*

Your Royal Highness's

Much distinguished,

Most grateful,

Most obedient,

And most devoted Servant,

ISABELLA HEDGELAND.

York Place, Brompton, Sept. 1, 1813.

PREFACE.

While critics bend their inauspicious eyes
On each devoted page that dares to rise,
And brave their piercing glance ; with fury then,
Pour forth the flowing bitters of the pen,
Exposing authors' faults to public view,
In English magazine or Scotch review ;
Meeting some novel whose soft pleasing wile,
Asks not, but seems to steal the reader's smile ;
Scarce deigning to regard its varied page,
While more important works their cares engage,
After one evil-boding look exclaim,
“ Vile trash—to literature's real name, -
As illegitimate, as vulgar puns
To mother—wit,”—out the sharp critique runs,
Fulfilling soon its master's dire design,
And condemnation falls on every line.
While moralists and sages fear to own,
A novel's title, 'mid their heap is known.
Take Seneca or Plato from the shelf,
And scorning even brilliant Fielding's self;
Conceiving all are like the lighter part,
Vow they corrupt the morals and the heart :

While these and others, frowning with disdain,
Command us all to cease our harmless strain,
'Twere vain so rough a journey to pursue,
And hope would shrink, abashed, before the view;
But that I bear a talisman so strong,
'Twill clear my way through all the dreaded
throng.

Ye critics, and ye hypercritics hold ;
Philosophers and moralists behold,
The name which graces this obtrusive page,
And, self-condemned, now stay your useless rage.
If this content ye not, submissive look
On her who sanctions this thrice-honored book.

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JANE DE DUNSTANVILLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE shades of a cold and bleak autumnal night were gathering fast around the ancient turrets of De Dunstanville Abbey, and dark and heavy moved the rolling clouds, amid the sickly gleams of a waning moon, involving the fabric and wide domains in an awful and indistinguishable gloom ; but darker, and heavier still, fell the deepening shadows of death on the closing eyes of the illustrious possessor, Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville. He had settled

every account between himself and the world ; his conscience and heaven ; he felt that hallowed calm within, which mortal approbation could not give ; he felt that which mortal censure could not take away ; he felt that the last sigh of attenuated nature would prove the prelude to immortal felicity, and introduce him to a society of the just made perfect ;—yet, even in these moments so near the fulness of all perfect peace, one darling hope, one darling wish, remained unsatisfied, and clinging to his inmost soul, gave anxiety to the separating moments of life, retarded the willing spirit in its progress to bliss, and deprived his mind of that serene and holy resignation which should distinguish the dying hours of a true christian. His head rested on pillows of down, his body reposed under gilded canopies of state,

attending physicians watched the slightest variation in his ebbing pulse, and his favourite domestics, with anxious respect and grateful attachment, waited to catch the faintest murmur, and, if possible, anticipate thought before it dawned ;—but their attentions and unwearied solicitudes were little regarded. Mr. Worthington, his chaplain, who had for a series of years lived with him in habits of confidence and pleasing intimacy, was seated on one side of the bed ; and behind his pillows appeared a poor fragile form, who with tearless eyes fixed on his beloved face, continued to wipe the cold dews of approaching death, as they effused from the aching, sunken brows of a grandfather. Each moment his breath was waxing fainter and fainter ; his pulse weaker, and his voice less articulate ; yet were the words “is he not come ?

will he, will he not come?" distinguishable between each convulsive sigh.

" My father, my father, he will come, indeed he will come !" said a soft, mild, tremulous voice, whose sweet influence the dying parent had ever felt, and ever allowed ; " he will indeed come, beloved father ; he knows you are sick, he knows that I suffer, oh he will come, and soon !"

She ceased to speak, for the noise of carriage wheels was heard rolling round the inner courts of the abbey ; the sound struck on the watchful ear, and vibrated to the very heart of her dying grandfather ; he gasped, and starting from his pillow, as if with renovated powers, and wringing the cold arm which had supported him, he uttered an emphatic "*now !*" a quick step ascended the stair ; it was heard ; it crossed the outer chambers, and

in the next moment a young man, with every indication of haste in his appearance, and with a kind of wild impatient agitation diffused through every feature of his fine countenance, stood before them. A momentary glow of innate pleasure tinged the ashy cheek of the dying Sir Geoffry, and while a faint ray of satisfied delight gleamed in his almost sightless eye, he motioned for the young stranger to draw near. The youth approached the bed, and sinking on his knees with an apprehensive, yet tender expression of duty, he grasped the hand, now scarcely sensible of the pressure, and in a voice almost inarticulate from complicated emotions, exclaimed, “ My benefactor !—my—my—” “ Father ! ” feebly added the dying man ; “ Yes ! your father ; ” and while he spoke, a sensation as pure, holy, and

sweet as it was new, pervaded his cold bosom.

A look from Mr. Worthington had dismissed the attendants, and only those interested in the deeply impressive scene impending remained in the dying chamber.

The pause that ensued was solemn and affecting ; Sir Geoffry seemed to collect every expiring energy to perform one last, dear hallowed act ; a serene and chastened rapture irradiated every pale feature of his benign countenance, as he raised the cold and passive hand of his darling, his beloved Jane, and placed it within that of the youth kneeling before him.

Jane had not moved from her reclining posture behind her grandfather, but with an agitated start she now looked up and encountered the full dark eye of him who

unconsciously grasped her hand ; her look was soft, tender, and timid, it seemed almost beseeching ; the expression of his was strange and wild, dubious and uncertain ; he seemed to shiver from some inward passing thought, and a confusion of ideas rushing tumultuously through his brain, communicated something of a terrible and inexplicable meaning to his countenance ; he felt immovable, suffocating for breath, but could not speak ; fearfully he cast one look on Jane, but the conscious eye recoiled, he ventured not another.

Poor Jane, distressed, confused, and suffering from many a sad and varied feeling before, now shook in the tremors of nameless anticipation ; but Sir Geoffry spoke ; respiration grew very difficult, his

spirit was lingering on his lip to declare its last dear purpose.

" My hour—the hour is come," said he ; " it is awful, yet to the good, it *is good*. Your mother sinned,—deeply sinned, young man ;" the youth shuddered, " but with you, I seal *her* pardon, and yet a few moments, and I will tell her you are *my child* ; the husband of my child ; this faultless angel," turning his dying gaze on Jane ; " her virtues have done all,—you are *my child*, I die your father."

The youth felt shivering in the horror of conflicting thought, he started from his knees, and probably would have rushed from the maddening scene, but that the hard dying grasp of his grandfather restrained the wild impulse of a tortured soul ; meantime the parent's breath was wasting fast, each became lower and

lower, and with much difficulty Mr. Worthington distinguished the faint sounds—“join them.”

A chill like the chill of death rushed through the veins of Jane, and seemed to reach the recesses of her heart.

The burnings of a proud indignant nature enfrenzied the brain of her cousin, and imparted to a face pale as death, the stern determination of a spirit nearly superhuman in its purposes ; yet both continued speechless, both stood immovable ; and during this suspensive pause of agony, the chaplain, well understanding the looks and wishes of his dying friend, took a book of prayer from the bed, and began the nuptial ceremony.

A faint shriek escaped the pale lips of Jane. “Stop !” was half respiration, but the word sunk in a sigh of anguish. A slight

convulsion crossed the features of Sir Geoffry, yet every sense was perfect ; a moment intervened—and in the next, the holy man to give the righteous spirit in its departure, all that earth could give it, pronounced,

“ You are one ; whom God hath joined together, let no one put asunder.” The last dim beam of separating nature shone in the uplifted eye of Sir Geoffry ; a smile of ineffable rapture diffused itself through every quiet feature, and extending his feeble arms as if to resign his ever conscious part to waiting angels, he uttered “ Amen !” A groan was heard ; and Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville never groaned again.

CHAPTER II.

ABSORBED in a confusion of painful thought as had been the mental faculties of poor Jane, her grandfather's last groan struck on her ear with boding horror, and roused every dormant power to all the bitterness of feeling ; she threw a melancholy look around, but no eye beamed sympathy ; she staggered for support ; no arm now offered its kindly aid ;—Jane was feeble from recent illness, she felt her feebleness, and the change of circumstance altogether rushing on imagination, overcame her fortitude, and she sunk lifeless on the dead body of him who, from lisping infancy, had lived to make her smile, and who only lived in her smile..

During the suspensive pause of invoca-

luntary inactivity that immediately followed Sir Geoffry's decease, Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, no longer claiming any attention, staggered unheeded from the chamber of death, and in the solitary gloom of a remote apartment, distressed and absorbed in the dark labyrinth of complicated reflections, passed several uninterrupted hours. A combination of sad circumstances before he saw the light were in these moments blending and co-operating with the anguished, outraged, and disappointed feelings of a nature strong, ardent, resolute, and unbending. The youth had never beheld his grandfather, till most unexpectedly summoned to attend the solemnities of his dying bed; yet he had bestowed on him the most liberal and finished education, allowed him a very splendid establishment, and took care to have him presented at the different courts

of Europe with a consequence becoming the heir of Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville ; his young cousin Jane, and a lady, who had acted a mother's part to her youth, had been his constant correspondents, and while her letters breathed the pure innocent tenderness of a fond sister, anxious to secure his attachment, she guilelessly discovered her own. Jane's maternal friend, Mrs. Fortrose, in every repeated letter endeavoured to impress on his mind the very large claims his generous grandfather had on his duty, gratitude, and unlimited obedience ; and assuredly the young Hildebrande reverenced his grandfather, offered the most unqualified deference to his opinions and counsels, and was affectionately grateful for his beneficence ; but there was a high and haughty spirit of independence seated within his bosom, which had descended to him with the blood

of De Dunstanville, which he felt would assert itself, and that would proudly give a limit to obedience ; but his mind dwelt not on the ungracious theme ; fearlessly he enjoyed every felicity in possession, and with that buoyancy of hope peculiar to the young and ardent, he had raised a fairy fabrick of surpassing bliss for the future, when the mandate arrived, which in its consequences proved distressive to many a dear and long indulged expectation, and reduced a structure, which generous attachment had erected, to the very grave of disappointment itself. His inherent pride could not brook control, and his indignant spirit would have defied compulsion in any form ; but to strike at once altogether to the very root of a beloved purpose, every honest, and dearer right of the human heart revolted from the tyranny, and the

proud Hildebrande Fitz Ormond could have died, but never would have yielded to the oppressive violation of native freedom.

Unsanctioned and unknown to every one except the fair being herself, Hildebrande had plighted, solemnly plighted, his faith, and given that heart entirely away, the every movement of which his grandfather conceived his voluntary favours invested him with power to exclusively guide.

On his arrival at De Dunstanville Abbey for the first time, when he approached his dying parent, and encountered the only look he had ever vouchsafed to bestow on the child of his child, what must have been his sensations to behold a ring, that pledge of bliss or misery, a license, and the sacred volume which only ought to

bind soul to soul, all displayed for the immediate celebration of that solemn and momentous compact never to be broken but with the rending chord of life, or shame, and obloquy. All his kindlier feelings had been in a glow as he drew near, and but for the premeditated act which his proud tenacity deemed outrage, and of which his dying grandfather's words left no dubious construction, duty and tenderness would have occupied every thought, and displayed themselves in every action ; he had been allowed no time to consider or remonstrate, to modify circumstances, to concede or recede, he could neither penetrate his motives, views, aims, nor purposes ; he only knew the cup of fate was at his lips, and that in the moment he first beheld a parent, he also felt a tyrant ; yet, he had apparently, and without the

least reluctance, yielded implicit acquiescence ;—true, the whole ceremony had not been pronounced, but the last awful adjuration still sounded on his appalled sense, and vibrated on every chord of feeling ; he threw a sad retrospective glance on the poor fragile suffering frame of his confused, abashed, and shrinking cousin, and then memory reverted to the glowing energies, and blooming beauties of the matchless creature whose soft enchantments had captivated his reason, and enslaved his understanding. Horror was in the contrast ; he shrunk from the warring conflict of agonized reflection, and while burning tears were rushing down cheeks flushed with strong indignant passions, the house steward, with looks of affectionate humility, which seemed to deprecate his resentment for apparent neglect, requested

to know if he would join Mr. Worthington in the saloon, or have refreshments served up in his apartment?

The old man's eyes were suffused in tears before he entered, they now ran over to behold the painful emotion visible in the countenance of him, whose mother in lisping infancy he had borne in his arms, and whose cherry lips had kissed him a thousand and a thousand times; her child, her only child, all that remained of her on earth now stood before him, and while contemplating a figure blooming in youthful graces, and dignified with all the improved advantages of manhood, the good man struck with an involuntary reverence, sunk on his knees, and with a fervor becoming a patriarch, exclaimed, "God be gracious unto thee, my son! and may thy children, and the children of

my young lady, heir the lands of De Dunstanville to the latest posterity ; then will the withering virtues of the ancient stock revive, then will good days come again among us, then will good people be given to the earth, and angels to the heavens !”

“ To half your prayer my good and pious father,” replied the youth, softened by his honest attachment, “ my soul responds Amen ! the other, bearing reference to myself, is too dubious in its import ; the interests and affections of Jane De Dunstanville must ever be distinct from mine ; our names and nature are distinct, they cannot blend ; yet, be you faithful to your mistress, and take my thanks for your kind prayers ; they are my own,” he added proudly, “ I have nothing else I can presume to give, I would be alone —but stay, your chaplain must be admitted,

he may have communications to make demanding notice, say, therefore, if you please, I am ready to receive him."

The old man with looks of sorrow and surprise now left the room, and as he slowly closed the door, he repeated, "sad times ! sad times ! I fear me sad times are coming again ; well, well, heaven will be a fine place, I get nearer and nearer." He met the chaplain ascending the stairs, and simply saying, the young gentleman expected him, he passed into the servants' hall, gave some necessary orders, and with his usual benediction of the night to the melancholy group assembled there, with a heavy and predictive heart he retired to bed, though not to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

"I LAMENT, my dear Sir, obtruding on your retirement at so unseasonable an hour," said the chaplain, addressing Fitz Ormond with looks of kindness, and in a voice of friendship; "I do lament it, as it may be supposed you would wish to devote these first moments to the sacred claims of sorrow, for the best of parents, and of men; but the pressing exigency, the imperious necessity of one asserting the right to act as heir, and co-operate with me in the duties of executorship, must supersede all ceremony, and even the feelings of the friend and relative."

"Mr. Worthington," interrupted the youth in some agitation—"I am all attention, and have much to learn, and if I judge aright, you are the oracle I must consult, with you it rests to develope the painful mystery of my present situation."

Mr. Worthington felt uneasy, and he looked embarrassed.

"I trust," said he, at length, "you do not affect an entire ignorance of your late grandfather's wishes; only a few hours since you stood beside his death-bed, his dying words communicated much—you heard, and for the first time, his blessing; you could not misunderstand the implied conditions of that blessing, and it is fit you should clearly understand the duties annexed, and the consequences of their failure."

"Memory shrinks disgusted from *all*

except the blessing," interrupted Mr. Fitz Ormond; " therefore, to you, Sir, I would owe a perfect understanding of that *only* which you consider indispensably necessary for me to hear and reply to."

" The conditions, Sir, are happy, the obligations easy," rejoined the chaplain ; yet he could perceive they were anticipated with something of a pre-disposition to reject them, happy and easy as he himself considered them.

" This parchment," he continued, " was delivered open for the present purpose ; briefly and simply, then, you, Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, are required to drop the said name, and take and bear the name and arms of your maternal ancestors, that of De Dunstanville, and that it may be supported with its ancient splendour, an interest has been secured to invest you

with the title, now extinct by your grandfather's decease."

" If you are rightly understood, Sir," said Fitz Ormond, with haughty impatience, " it is expected I should resign the name my father gave to my mother, and assume that of him who pursued that father with unrelenting vengeance, and who allowed that mother to sink heart-broken to an early and obscure grave."

" Some retrospects are painful and improper," said Mr. Worthington, mildly, " often ill-timed, frequently aggravate the present, and cannot meliorate the past, though they may much embitter, and materially interfere with the future welfare of our lives :—but to proceed, it was further the will of the deceased, that the whole of the De Dunstanville estates, together with the immense funded property

and valuable personals, do devolve on you, on your marriage with your cousin Jane, reserving only for her sole, separate, and exclusive use, five thousand pounds per annum, with her favourite cottage and grounds, called Sans Souci, adjoining the forest of De Dunstanville; and should any circumstance arise to impede these nuptials, or either party refuse to ratify them, the said party is to be excluded, and the lands, property, &c. &c. to be solely, and entirely possessed by him, or her, willing and ready to accede to all the conditions of Sir Geoffry's will; should the demur arise with Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, he only to be entitled to five hundred pounds per annum during his natural life; if with Jane De Dunstanville the forfeiture, only giving her claim to the above-mentioned five thousand pounds.

per annum. I have only now to add, Mr. Fitz Ormond, that your cousin, with modest pleasure, accepts your vows—to her gentle hand, you will owe fortunes that are princely; to her gentle heart, a felicity rarely experienced, for she loves you, has long, and ever loved you, dearer than self, has loved you."

"Loves me!" repeated the youth, with consternation bordering on agony, "the highly-intelligent, the distinguished, the noble-minded, the refined Miss De Dunstanville, affect to love a man she had never seen?"

"Be not too confident that you have never been seen," said the chaplain,—the remark was unheeded.

"A delicate mind," Fitz Ormond continued, "would not own the degrading weakness, a generous mind would disdain

the affectation of it, even to attain the dearest purposes."

" Young man, you speak of her, whose worth I fear, your nature cannot appreciate," cried the chaplain, generously vindicating the pure feelings of a heart he had assisted to form, and whose disinterested beneficence towards her cousin he well knew ; " her soul is the seat of honour, her mind, the residence of virtue, and in her pure uncontaminated bosom, blend all the gentle affections, and generous charities, that elevate and endear superior natures ;—for you, Sir, what has she not attempted, what has she not obtained ? Recollect your abject, forsaken state, your misery, your ignorance,—recollect all, and when you have compared it with your present condition, learn you

owe it all to the persuasive pleading of that angel."

The good man's fervid solicitude had hurried him beyond the limits of his usual discretion and forbearance ; at any other time, reason would have held her empire, and reflection told him, "reproach but corrodes the proud mind, and retards the purpose it would advance." Fitz Ormond's nature was high, impetuous, and incontrollable, and recollection only fortified him in his premeditated rejection, and irritated him to super-add a cold contemptuous scorn to that rejection, which, in calm reflective moments, would have made his heart mourn but to think of.

"Good Sir," said he, with difficulty repressing the indignant emotions as they rose to his lips, "I have to thank you much for your very candid enumertion of

my incalculable, vast, and unreturnable obligations, to the charity of my murdered mother's father ; I had long, Sir, been willing to impute many of his transgressions against that mother to misrepresentation and malignity ; and for his bounties to myself, did him reverence ; but you teach me, that to him my debt is cancelled ; —to me, ever alike unkind and unjust ; in his favourite, he indulged an eccentric wild caprice ; and at her bidding, I was permitted to grow beneath the influence of his imagined beneficence, therefore, to her I must transfer the vast sum of obligation ; to her, whom you denominate an angel. I would most willingly offer my obeisance to such transcendant charms, (he added with cold sarcasm) but would first inquire what new sphere of beauty your investigating eye has discovered, for too surely

your angel is of a peculiar order, and as yet but little known, and, I should think, less acknowledged."

"Unmannered, and unmanly ! know, to your everlasting confusion—"

Fitz Ormond calmly stopped him.

"We waste the moments, Mr. Worthington, both have purposes which claim attention, take charge then of my gratitude to Miss De Dunstanville, for kindnesses and intentions which from her I never *did* deserve, and from her I never *can* deserve ; the consciousness of my own demerits, and estranged heart, tell me I can have no pretensions to her future notice, nor can she have any hope of my acquiescence ; I proudly determine to preserve a father's name, to proudly justify a destroyed mother ; I will proudly labour for my daily bread ; I will proudly assert,

and I will proudly cherish, my soul's dearest affection ; — I may perish, but will never forsake her to whom I have plighted my faith and my honour, and to whose matchless virtues, my heart offers a homage chaste, pure, fervid, and holy ; to Sir Geoffry's possessions — I disclaim all pretension—my rejection of his heiress, secures all her own. I disclaim every participation of his fortune ; it would impose on me the horrors of the worst of perjuries, and the miseries of constrained duties ; under the specious names of affluence and felicity, it would bind every heaven-born free affection—it would bind every generous feeling with the galling fetters of parental tyranny ; my spirit shrinks indignant from such hard demands on duty, spurns such slavish conditions, and every better principle will assert itself.

I can return to my native poverty and rags, but will never dim the honour of an upright mind, never barter the pure homage of the heart, for the tinsel trappings of wealth.

“ Yes !” continued he, a glow of dignified pride irradiating every fine feature of his youthful face, and imparting a bright superiority to his whole figure, “ I will be firm in the performance of every important, every sacred duty, and as *love*, in the bosom of her I *love*, is the feeling of an angel, it will inspire me to become worthy of itself ; it will endear, dignify, and improve, every sentiment, and in emulating superior excellence, I shall rise above the common virtues, and become supereminently great.”

What the good chaplain’s observations might have been on this spirited and

decisive declaration, is uncertain, for before he could give them utterance, the door of the apartment opened, and Miss De Dunstanville herself appeared.

CHAPTER IV.

THE orphan heiress was calm and collected in her manner ; a modest grace and softened dignity uniting with the enfeebling effects of a recent and severe illness, which had nearly deprived her of life, gave to her tall fragile form, an air scarcely mortal ; she could not be said to captivate, but her mild and melancholy manner inspired an interest bordering almost on anguish, and a feeling of reverence, as if an impassive being had appeared before them ; her accents when she spoke, were low and tremulous, yet they sunk upon the heart impressive, and those unhappy features which had excited such risings of disgust in the bosom of her

cousin, and drawn forth such bitter sarcasm, were now undistinguishable ; for, added to the pale gleam of a single taper, which faintly lighted up the chamber, she had thrown a thick black veil over her head, that shrouded her face in almost an impenetrable gloom.

“ Dear Miss De Dunstanville ! how came you here ? ” exclaimed Mr. Worthington, in alarm, as she approached, while her cousin’s humanity, prevailing over prejudice, with even a lover’s haste, supported her to a sofa ; indeed, a timid gracefulness, an indefinable charm, a nameless something about her, strangely affected him, and every soft, every better feeling of his nature rose in array against him, as he thought on the ungracious words he had uttered of one whose gentleness seemed to woo a sustaining hand to help it,

instead of being crushed by the rude tongue of undeserved and severe reproach.

She bowed to both as she extended her hand to the chaplain, saying, “ Fear nothing for me, my friend, I have a purpose that will support me through these moments, fearful as they seem ; acquit me, gentlemen, of the meanness of pre-meditated listening, though I own having been an auditress of your conference.”

Young Fitz Ormond shrunk within himself, confused and abashed, as she spoke ; she had heard his cruel, scornful remarks on the deformity of her features—to apologise, to even speak, he felt impossible, without increasing his own confusion.

She went on—“ A desire no way unnatural, and therefore unnecessary to explain, induced me to remain when I heard myself and my concerns the subject of

your converstation ;—Mr. Fitz Ormond, (turning to him mildly) you behold me here with a mind prepared, like yourself, to perform more than common duties, but with this difference, I cannot rise super-eminently great ; no—I aspire not to that, I can only be just to myself and to you. I would have you banish the uneasy remembrance that I know your opinions ; it may interfere with our arrangements for the future, and it is my wish to convince you, that my frightful deformity of features extends not to the mind ; you cannot be happy with me, but I can make you happy without me ; you may then forgive the imperfections of her face, whose heart is above yielding to the weakness of establishing happiness on the ruins of yours.”

Her every word struck daggers ; but her

manner imposed silence, and she went on—“ You need not wonder, that with the unlimited power I held over the feelings, and very senses of my beloved, my dead grandfather—” here her voice faltered, tears choaked her utterance, but she soon resumed—“ You need not wonder, I say, that with such power, I could influence his judgment, and direct his *will*; my kind friend here, (pointing to the chaplain) holds one, but he must forgive that I have another of a later date, unfettered by any clause or condition, my own pleasure excepted; it leaves me the undisputed heiress of the whole. I had hopes, *how* and where formed, no matter now, they shall yield to duties, the first of which shall enable you to pledge your hand where you have plighted your faith; that exalted principle, *love*, which you say

in *her bosom*, and I say in every bosom, is the feeling of an angel, would receive poor evidence from me, if the pitiful consideration of *self* could interfere with the holy and sanctified union of two congenial hearts ; this paper gives you unconditional and undisputed possession of your grandfather's lands, personals, and valuables ; and tell her you love, she is not obliged to me ; I would give you exclusive felicity, though doubt not but the prayer is ardent that *both* may be happy,"

Astonishment and delight for a time held him mute and immoveable ; but rapid was the succession of unutterable thought ; sorrow, shame, pride, gratitude, regret, all blending assailed his bosom at once, the conflict of contending passions was too much for human endurance ; he gazed upon her nearly maddened, and sinking

at her feet almost insensible, hid his face, covered with tears, in her robe ; she allowed some moments for his emotion to subside, when with her own voice weakened, she desired him to rise.

“ You mistake me for the object of your adoration.”

“ Generous ! matchless woman ! no ; you deserve adoration, and—”

“ Stop there !” she interrupted, anticipating his compliment ; “ I have only performed one duty ; do not, by ill-timed praise, incapacitate me from performing some more difficult. It is the natural wish of woman to please ; (said she, after a pause) I wished to please, I now have pleased.”

“ Dearest Miss De Dunstanville !” cried Fitz Ormond, rising above *self* ; “ I can-

not be abject, will not be outdone in generosity ; be the possessions so justly bestowed on you, your own ; sacred to your own beneficent purposes ; in your hands they will prove diffusive blessings ; in mine, narrow, selfish, contracted—”

“ No ! no ! ” she interrupted, “ you draw erroneous conclusions, you will make wealth a blessing to many, and in Sans Souci, and its dependencies, I have ample means ; and now,” she added, extending to him a hand not quite steady, “ farewell ! may God bless you ! Do not forget, all *I* could do to bless you, I have done—so again, farewell ! ”

“ Do not leave me yet,” he cried, wildly grasping her hands ; “ amiable Jane, do not leave me ! take back your bounties, your kindnesses, they would crush me ;

give me reproaches, hatred, curses ; these I can bear, these from you I deserve."

" I have none of these to give you," she cried, her voice scarcely audible from inward sobs, " Oh ! go, while I have power to bid you, go ; temper your feelings, moderate your passions, be happy."

" Tremendous powers ! whose words, whose tones, were these I heard ?" he exclaimed, wringing her hands, " mildest, best of beings, where did you hear them ? how came the sound upon my ear ? inexplicable enchantment hangs about you, and enfrenzies every sense ; you whirl my brain to madness, and fill me with imaginings so wild and strange, that memory is bursting with its load."

" Your transports, Sir, alarm Miss De Dunstanville," said the chaplain " do not further disturb a mind that has much to think of, and much to do."

"True," said Jane, rising, "and here I have done—farewell, Mr. Fitz Ormond. Should we ever meet again," she paused:—"Should we ever meet again"! he repeated, detaining her with a look of wild and strange anguish, "what, beloved cousin! should we ever meet again!" "You will know me," she replied, withdrawing her hand from his impassioned grasp, and with a groan of irrepressible anguish, she rushed from the apartment.

The chaplain now bade him a cold and formal good-night; but lost in gloomy and wild abstracted thoughts, motionless as the statue he stood, and neither heard his salute, nor observed his departure; the soft echo of the enchanting tones he had last heard still vibrated on his ear, and sense was inaccessible to any ruder sound.

CHAPTER V.

SIR Geoffry De Dunstanville was born with the high and impetuous passions of a great and uncomman mind ; honour, truth, the strictest integrity, and the truest benevolence, governed all his actions ; his every principle was implanted by the hand of Heaven, and ennobled human nature ; but his pride and prejudices were the cultivation of the world ; superior birth, immense possessions, and uncontrolled power, are bad correctives of human infirmities ; Sir Geoffry's birth cherished his native pride, his wealth strengthened and supported his hereditary prejudices, and his power enabled him, too much for his own tranquillity, to encourage and

gratify resentments, which created woes that only terminated in the grave. His liberalities were unbounded, and his beneficence diffusive ; he was the orphan's father, and the widow's friend ; the support of the neglected, and the solace of the afflicted ; he prevented application, and retreated from acknowledgement ; “ *I want,*” he would say “ are too humiliating from one mortal to another ; bitter to speak ; painful to hear ; our mighty distinctions, what are they ? the soundings of of a name, perishable dross, and a few acres of that earth which must one day cover the proudest. Half the calamities of human life,” he would add, “ may be attributed to our never feeling *for others* what a beneficent God has shielded us from feeling *in ourselves.*” Such was Sir Geoffry’s system of charity. His mind

was highly intelligent, and his understanding brilliant ; his figure graceful and manly, and his countenance open and finely expressive ; his ancestors had been among the first baronets, and glorying in the ancient distinction, he preferred the honourable badge of the bloody hand, which had been gained in a bloody field, to the higher sounding peerage purchased by gold, or patronage. His ancestors had distinguished themselves both in the cabinet and the field ; his grandfather, after having signalized himself at the battle of the Boyne, and received the thanks and embrace of the victorious William, fell dead at the feet of his monarch by a pistol ball from the hand of an Irish officer in the service of the abdicated James ; Sir Anthony De Dunstanville had twice disarmed this dastard, and the last time, as

victory was sounding, gave him his life ; instead of having inspired gratitude, the mortifying remembrance rankled in a malignant heart, which burned with the savage desire of revenge ; and he resolved to take the life of him who had so generously spared his own ; his aim was too well directed, and the hero, while glowing with victory, dropped a corpse. That this atrocious deed was perpetrated by an Irishman, falsely and fatally established an indignant and implacable hatred in the De Dunstanville family against the whole nation, and by having been cherished, it became in time a hereditary principle ; and circumstances, in Sir Geoffry's life, blew the latent spark into a fierce and destroying flame.

Early in life he married Lady Eglantine, only daughter of the Earl of Clancarron ;

who, in the first year of their union, made him the father of a blooming boy, that gave early promise of being their pride and blessing ; to increase their felicity, again his beautiful wife drew near her time, and gave a new throb of anticipated delight.

“ Ah ! thoughtless mortals, ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.” *

The event proved the pious divine right who says, “ *our comforts become killing.* ” Lady Eglantine gave him a daughter ; blessed her boy, blessed her innocent murdress, and casting a nameless look upon her husband, expired.

The life which had rendered Sir Geoffry’s life delightful, was now no more ; but the lisping voice of his boy, and the soft beseeching eye of little Eglen-tine, which beamed with a mother’s sweetness, reminded him he was a father.

The brother and sister were reared beneath their father's indulgent eye, in the solitary grandeur of De Dunstanville Abbey ; they had all the advantages of a superior education, but little acquainted with the usages of society ; no controul over their actions, and accustomed to the voluntary homage of the household and tenantry, no wonder that feeling, in their ardent and guileless bosoms, reached a degree of enthusiasm that bordered on romance ; Sir Geoffry perceived the error of his system in the innocent flights of their vivid imagination, and, to counteract the growing evil, he sent his son to Eton, and engaged a lady of finished education and manners to attend his daughter in the polished circles of life. Miss De Dunstanville was more interesting than attractive,

but once loved, she was loved for ever ; her gentleness and goodness made her her father's pleasure, but his son was his pride and delight ; he thought him superior of his kind, and, with paternal exultation, in idea, beheld him the bright representative of an illustrious and virtuous ancestry ; "to my people," proudly cried the father, "my son will be myself ; he will transmit the sacred inheritance of worth to future generations, while I, in better worlds, tell my Eglantine *he is her son.*"

Sir Geoffry's expectations of his son were well founded ; his talents, morals, dispositions, and figure, were all superior, and the father believed he could not be happier till this darling son, after a visit to his mother's relations, presented as his bride his cousin Lady Jane Clancarron ; that he had transplanted this fair lily of

the north into the richer and more luxuriant climes of England, delighted all parties ; for mild, modest, and retiring as the pale primrose of the spring, though she had grown and blossomed in the bleak and ungenial soil of a rough Hebridean shore, her affections were warm, her virtues glowing, and her mind pure as angels, was altogether devoted to her youthful husband, who in return loved her with the chapest fervour. She had no dower, and the reduced fortunes of the house of Clancarron, had obliged the widowed countess, with her son and daughter, to seclude themselves in their old solitary castle ; for the pride of birth was strong, and she could not descend from the elevated sphere in which she had moved when in the world : her pretty Jane's marriage with her wealthy cousin gratified

every maternal feeling, and as the young earl was amiable and handsome, her expectations for him were unbounded, his conquests were extending, and very few of the wealthiest Caledonian lassies would have refused the poor peer of Clancarron ; one in particular breathed many a sigh behind her coronet, and would have given it altogether for his blue bonnet, and goud in goupins to have been rowed in his tartan plaid ; but it was reserved for a fair maiden of the borders ; he had accompanied his sister to De Dunstanville, and no sooner did he behold Eglantine, than he felt her the arbitress of his future destiny ; but he had little to hope, for though she would dance, walk, and jest with him ; sing, play, and listen to him, and often call him her own dear, dear, Highland laddie, it was all done with that

ease and singleness of thought, that spoke a heart uninterested. The idea of such an union was to Sir Geoffry most gratifying ; but Eglantine's heart, as she said, was her very own ; and when urged on the subject, with candour she replied, that indeed she loved her cousin dearly, but then it was *her cousin* that *she did love*, but as Earl Archy Clancarron, Eglantine said, she must declare, that if his wife, and obliged to love him, why she should not be able to love him at all.

About this period, the whole family of De Dunstanville left the abbey for the gay metropolis, and the full gantlet of pleasure was run through all its novelties, when Lady Jane's pregnancy obliged her to remember much depended on her safety ; and as Sir Geoffry was desirous that the expected heir should respire his first breath

beneath the turrets of De Dunstanville, orders were given to prepare for their departure. It was thought Eglantine grew rather pale at the intimation, but it was a thought to which none gave utterance.

During their residence in London, Sir Geoffry had paid the visit of a month to an old friend in Norfolk, and while he was absent, his son was in the habit of frequenting a library celebrated for its early publication of every pamphlet whether literary or political ; and there he had contracted an intimacy, which was fast ripening into friendship, with a young Irishman of the ancient house of Fitz Ormond ; the innate virtues of this youth glowed in his fine open countenance ; for he possessed one of those faces which tell the character at a look ; and the graces of his manner invited every observant eye to a near contempla-

tion of that worth, which distinguished his nature. The soul of Mr. De Dunstanville was unfettered by the narrowing prejudices which gave a shade to his father's character, and for this youth he felt the sentiment which unites mind to mind. He had visited at the house with easy freedom, and before the brother was aware, the hapless Eglantine's innocent speaking looks, plainly said, "my heart is in Fitz Ormond's keeping." They both loved ; their love was madness, yet they loved ; youth, beauty, innocence, honour, and a brother, sanctioned the passion ; but the deep-rooted hatred and prejudices of Sir Geoffry filled them with boding horror ; and when too late, the affectionate brother regretted the error he had committed. All he could do, was to promise his interest and persuasions, when happy circumstances

might offer opportunity. The lovers often met in public ; difficulty only threw a charm over their attachment, and hope, with her fairy colours, was dressing the future in felicity, when fate, as if determined to raise adamantine barriers between them, blighted their prospect, and buried all in the grave of disappointment.

Sir Geoffry had one morning accompanied his son to the library, when having perused a newspaper with marks of strong indignation, he threw it down, saying, while long dormant, yet unsubdued prejudice burst forth, “ The assassinations of these savage Irishmen really disgrace humanity ; they are lost to humanity *now* as when buried in their native barbarity centuries ago.”

“ Say you so ?” retorted an Hibernian officer, seated opposite, the fire of venge-

ance darting from his eyes and blazing through his face, “ And what may you think of a savage Englishman, who, with all his palaver of humanity, can brand a whole brave nation for the fault of an ignorant, and may be irritated, individual ; and then do you mind me, he only murders the body, and arrah by my soul, you do worse, for you murder the whole character ; who then is the worst assassin ? ”

Mr. De Dunstanville was sensible that his father’s unqualified invective was reprehensible, and had excited the vengeance of an implacable spirit.

“ The expression was inadvertent,” said he, rising and addressing the Hibernian with respect, “ it certainly, Sir, was inadvertent, for this gentleman’s opinion is confined to an injury done his family.

by a private individual, but neither insult, nor offence was meant."

" Meant!" he repeated, working himself up to frenzy. " I never look to meanings, words are enough for Dermot Mac Dermot, and if the gentleman, with all his fine humanity, do not eat up his words, why I keep two tight little creatures at home, that will save him the trouble of speaking any more."

" Eat up!—spoken in character, I protest," said Sir Geoffry, with cool contempt, " and as unconvinced of error, I never rescind, and as you Mr. Mac Dermot appear ill qualified to ameliorate unfavourable impressions, why I am ready to hold parley with the little creatures you speak of, as the more agreeable conversation of the two."

" Permit the interference of a stranger,

I entreat," cried young Fitz Ormond, advancing, all the generous feelings of a superior nature glowing in his countenance, while his heart trembled for the consequences as deathly to his love; "moderate your mistaken resentment, I beseech; national prejudice often originates in very remote causes, in which the prejudice itself has no share."

"Palpeen, be quiet," cried Mac Dermot, working up his fiery nature to fury, befitting his purpose, "be quiet with your botheration!" and as he spoke he darted forward in the attitude of offering manual indignity; but his intention was impeded, for the agile step of Fitz Ormond interposed between him and the father of her he loved, and opposing himself as a shield, he cried, "this ruffian violence, Major Mac Dermot, dissolves all ties, breaks down all

obligation, move but one step," and he looked with the bold energy of a good purpose, "move but one step to offer insult here, and I will forget—no, I will remember, *you* answered for *me* to my maker, and I save you from disgracing yourself, and deforming his workmanship."

This from his god-son, from the son of his adoption; for such young Fitz Ormond was, choked the powers of utterance; yet the spirit of vengeance glared in his dark rolling eye-balls, his jaws were distended wide, but no sound issued, and as some gentlemen present forcibly held him from venting his rage on the youth, the foam dropped from his blue lips, his teeth gnashed, and he fell exhausted among them.

Sir Geoffry approached Mr. Fitz Ormond, and took his hand, "Young gentle-

man," said he, and a mild benignity now attempered his manner, "you have incalculable claims on my gratitude, you did for me, what I could not do for myself; preserved me from an indecency of passion in another, to which the weakness of my own exposed me, take then my thanks," he added, kindly pressing his hand, "and become unto my son as a brother."

What a moment was this to the enamoured Fitz Orinond! a tide of joy rushed through his veins; a tumult of glowing hopes sprung up in his heart, and enraptured by Sir Geoffry's praise, he had fallen at his feet and avowed his love; but the recollection that Ireland gave him birth, fell like the cold bolt of despair into his bosom, and shuddering in thought, he withdrew his hand from the kindly pres-

sure of Sir Geoffry, and with the look of a calm accusing spirit robbed of its repose, replied, "I dare not, Sir, dare not accept what I would perish to attain."

Sir Geoffry fixed on him a penetrating eye, "What means this strong emotion?"

"It means," repeated he, covering his face to hide the burning tears, "it means—ah! tyrant, prejudice!—it means that—that—I am an Irishman," and darted from his presence.

Too well Mr. De Dunstanville understood the mystery of his friend's feelings.

CHAPTER VI.

SIR Geoffry received a formal challenge from Major Mac Dermot to meet him next morning ; his son graspt his hand, “ My dear father I am younger, and — ”

“ My son, no more of that ; no Jane can feel my loss, I can widow no fond heart ; ” and to avoid the subject he joined the females in the drawing room. “ You have been saucy truants,” said he to them, “ and to-morrow I shall make reprisals, and be from home, perhaps all day.”

“ You will not be so cruel,” said Lady Jane, with one of those soft tones which always went with its full effect to Sir Geoffry’s heart, “ no, you will not, my dear father.”

He durst not encounter her eye, durst not trust his voice to answer her, and his son, feeling his embarrassment, added, "we must own, my Jenny, our purpose is not very charitable either, for we are engaged to go a shooting."

"Shooting!" she repeated unconsciously, "how barbarous! you will then widow the wife, orphan the nestling, and spread desolation among the downy beds of peace."

Her voice spoke deadly omen on the father's ear; when to change the subject, Mr. De Dunstanville begged Eglantine to take her harp, while he gallantly took the hands of his wife; saying,

"And I loved her the more when I heard,
Such tenderness flow from her tongue."

"One of your blithest lilts, Eglantine," said her brother.

"But I am not in a blithe humour," she replied, drawing her fingers over the strings carelessly; "however, Lord Clan-carron, with your help we can try 'the flower of love lies bleeding.'"

"'The flower of love lies bleeding?'" repeated her brother, the gloom of thought stealing over his features, "'O'Conor's child, I think, is that your blithest air, Eglantine?'"

"Very fit for a dirge," cried her father, "'Eglantine is rather unfortunate in her selection of blithe airs.'"

"Dear Sir," said she, vexed almost to tears, which gave involuntary meaning to her tones, "though it be Irish, I thought it might please in a Highland dress."

The father arose to conceal a boding agitation, when his daughter, apprehensive she had said too much, played several

Scotch airs, and soothed all to apparent harmony.

Next morning Sir Geoffry and his son arose very early; their alleged shooting party prevented suspicion. "Within one hour," said Sir Geoffry, and he was on his knees, I may have precipitated a fellow being into an unchangeable state, with heavy imperfections on his head, and in the awful day of reckoning, what character will be on the surviving spirit, alas! the hero on earth may be a demon there; but I cannot recede—Father, be merciful to thine erring creatures!"

And he was merciful.

Sir Geoffry and his son found Major Mac Dermot, his second, and a surgeon, waiting on the appointed spot. Sir Geoffry bowed, "Major Mac Dermot as this rencontre may prove fatally decisive to one,

or both, allow me the hope that the youth whose interposition did his nature honour, though it offended you, is forgiven."

Mac Dermot smiled malignly ; remembrance rankled in his embittered heart, and gnawing his lips with a look of spite, he repeated, "forgiven him ! no, nor forgotten him neither ; and that he may not forget me, I have left him a shilling good Irish money, to drink a good journey to me this morning, or to buy a rope to help him on his own to-morrow."

Sir Geoffry retreated indignant, poor Fitz Ormond ! and he looked towards his son—he was understood ; and operations commenced.

The ground was measured, the pistols examined, every preliminary settled ; and the seconds had only to give the decisive

word, fire—when three men were seen hastening toward them ; for a moment intention was suspended, and the next they were in the hands of justice. Mr. De Dunstanville secretly exulted ; the father surrendered with calmness and dignity, but the Hibernian's fury knew no bounds, but submission. The magistrate, before whom they were taken, bound each party over to keep the peace for three years ; themselves in five thousand pounds each, and their sureties in two thousand ; Sir Geoffry calmly submitted ; but the disappointed vengeance of his ruthless opponent gave some idea of a demon, and though for a time no sound issued from his whitened lips, he looked some meaning, dark, hidden, deep, and terrific ; at length he spoke, yet more terrible expres-

sion lurked in his glaring eye, than what the ear heard.

"Aye," he said, "you shall have security; Sir Geoffry now is safe, quite safe," he repeated, and then sunk into the gloom of unuttered thought.

The ladies had been altogether strangers to this transaction, and that the voice of rumour with its many tongues might not reach them, their departure from town was instantly resolved on.

The evening before, Mr. De Dunstanville had an interview with young Fitz Ormond, and they exchanged assurances of lasting friendship; and Mr. De Dunstanville promised to promote his wishes with Eglington to the utmost; and though he could not desire him to hope, he begged he would not despair; and thus the

generous friends parted never to meet again.

Once Mr. De Dunstanville ventured to mention the subject ; but alas ! it is difficult to drag from the firm bosom of age, the prejudices imbibed and cherished in youth ; Sir Geoffry coldly replied to his praises of Fitz Ormond, that he had but two wishes on that subject ; one that the young man might reconcile himself to his boisterous kinsman, and the other, that he might never more hear of the name of either.

Poor Eglantine still breathed the secret sigh, but said nothing ; Lord Clancarron, he too sighed, but his wishes advanced nothing ; and only that Sir Geoffry's whole attention was now occupied by the interesting situation of Lady Jane, it is likely his authority would have interposed to

complete an engagement which had no secondary place among his wishes.

It was drawing towards the close of a very sultry day, when the sun, sinking beyond the distant hills, diffused a softened radiance over the face of nature; its last brightenings were glittering through the trees, and the evening breezes, rising soft and cool, exhaled unnumbered odours from the variegated shrubs and flowers which grew in wild profusion; there was a hallowed stillness in the calm declining day, that inspired a pleasing melancholy in the meditative mind, and invited Sir Geoffry and his beloved daughter-in-law to wander forth; he was soothing her spirits, now rather depressed, with the sweetest hopes of coming joy, and in all the pride of a parental heart, pointed out many an intended improvement that would

enrich the expected darling; and if Lady Jane did not feel animated, her gentle nature assumed its appearance, and with an attempt at gaiety she cried, "Dear Sir, let us now seek out our virtuoso; he does deserve to share our ramble, yet lest some chrysalis or fossil should become my rival, let us explore his secret haunts."

Mr. De Dunstanville was a great admirer of nature's works, and in a small conservatory among the ruins of an old convent, he passed many a satisfied hour. The path way lay through a winding avenue of ancient oaks, which sublime in their awful gloom, almost precluded the setting sun-beam.

Nature was now sinking into solemn, and serene repose; the evening breeze blew softly over the long grass of the valley, and the murmur of distant waters

sounded mournfully sweet upon the pensive ear ; the moon was rising from her bed of silvery clouds, and her pale diffusive beam shed modest lustre over the deep-ending shadows of coming night ; they had emerged from the forest, and found themselves at the entrance of the wide extending ruin.

“ How sweetly solemn is this quiet hour, my dear father,” said Lady Jane, “ it inspires the apprehensive mind with that holy calm that gives anticipation of superior worlds ; my loved companion ! ” she cried, a sweet rapture kindling in her pure bosom, “ my soul’s companion, why art thou not here to share this hallowed moment ? ”

A sudden breeze springing up, the anxious father grew apprehensive of her taking cold, and proposed returning

to the abbey ; “ it was not much farther to the conservatory, and Mr. De Dunstanville would return with them.”

They quickened their steps, and reaching the building, ascended the flight of steps, and called, and called again. All was silent—all was still ; it was uncanny, but the key was left in the door ; they entered—something of confusion was visible ; shells, fossils, pieces of mechanism, and telescopes, were all scattered in disorder.

A strange indescribable fear suspended speech—when, horror to the senses, a pistol laying on the floor met her eye ; she claspt her hands in agony, and dreading she knew not what, rapid as the lightning’s flash she descended the steps, then, with her hands pressed on temples bursting

with unutterable thought, she flew wildly through the ruins.

Sir Geoffry, in equal alarm, but more collected, supported her in his arms, and would have gently forced her from the place, but she resisted his effort.

“ I will seek him,” she cried, breathing short, “ these shrinkings—these forebodings, oh—my father ! my father ! where is my husband ?”

An indistinct noise struck faintly on the ear.

“ What was that ?”

“ Nothing, my child, but the wind.”—
The sound was heard again.

“ That is a dreadful something, father,
hark !”

“ Beloved Jane, calm these terrors,
'tis but the night-bird ! see, he flits, it is
gone.”

"Aye, it flits ; boder of horror, what mean you ?"

A lengthened groan now mingled with the rising breeze, and with it sunk in saddened murmur. A cold horror, resembling the chill of death, ran through the veins of Sir Geoffry ; but in pity to her he held, he repressed the agony of thought ; she stopt, and rested her shaking frame against an old pillar ; the melancholy wind stole through the trees, and a moaning sounded near ; every aching sense felt maddened, when a favourite and faithful pointer was seen leaping above the long lank grass which skirted the tomb-stones, and, on reaching a broken arch, he stopt, and set up a fearful yell.

Sir Geoffry darted forward, the wife staggered after, and beheld Mr. De Dunstanville, pale, wounded, and expiring.

Aghast with speechless horror, stood the wretched father; the wife, in the deadening calm of an unutterable despair, knelt beside her worshipped, dying husband. She pressed her quivering lips to his chilly cheek—the pale anguish of approaching death convulsed every feature, and the drops of departing life hung on his sunken brow; his white lip was still, his half-closed eye beamless, and the crimson stream, in which he lay weltering, no longer gushed from the gaping wound in his bosom; life was receding fast, and the latest pulsation was about to throb, when the wife's groan of “ My husband! oh!—” struck the fleeting spirit; for one moment, the fainting powers revived, the darkened eye was raised, the clammy lip unclosed, one weak pressure of the nerveless hand was felt, one deep-drawn breath respiration—

heaven! and all was hushed ; the unconscious clay rested in the widow's arms, and the spirit, guided by angels, ascended to the everlasting beatitudes.

The widow felt that feeling which can never be felt long ; no shriek, no groan, no tear, was heard or seen ; she felt alternate burnings and deadly chills ; sudden pangs, a mother's pangs, with rending throbs, assailed her poor frame ; she clasped her murdered husband in her arms, and, in a voice that demons might have pitied, she cried, "Dead ! my husband dead ! I shared his sinless life, his sinless love ; his sinless death, and his heaven I will share, —all—all—wait !—pure spirit, wait !"

A groan—it lengthened into agony ; another—it sunk into a moan ; she started up, grasped the corps, and fell ; she grasped it tighter—tighter still—faintly sighed, —“God ! oh !——”

Lady Jane breathed no more ; in one moment she became a mother, a corpse, and an angel.

The father only a few hours before, and so happy. Humanity, beware ! be not proud, nor boast the fragile blessings of an hour !

Lord Clancarron and Eglantine had walked out to meet them ; their absence so late in the evening, had caused alarm and servants were dispatched in different directions ; too soon their eyes encountered the scene of death and despair. Eglantine soon lost all sense of misery in violent convulsions, while his Lordship, in speechless agony, raised the stiffening bodies of his brother and sister ; the attendants, in mute sorrow, did all that was to be done, while Lord Clancarron endeavoured, by every means his anguish would

allow him to use, to lead the wretched Sir Geoffry from the fatal ruins.

"Oh let me lead you from this scene of death and horror," he cried, "some fiend may still be lurking, and—"

He was interrupted by a voice, hoarse and horrid.

"I am that fiend! I did the work! it is mine—mine—all mine!"

And as these words, dire and appalling were heard, swift as the light'ning's flash, a figure rushed from the darkened gloom of the cloisters, to where the moon's bright beam fell full on features distorted by the glaring malignity of still unsated vengeance, and discovered Mac Dermot.

"I am that fiend!" he shrieked again, his blasting eye betraying the tempest within, and gnashing his teeth—"That man, (pointing to the petrified, Sir Geof-

fry) *he* made me the fiend ; *he* called my country savage, when he had no cause ; *his* prejudice fired my passions, *his* injustice nerved my arm ; he turned an honest bosom to a hell ; he turned the bold, proud impulse of a stormy nature, into vengeance, and now, now he feels it. His son once foiled, once disappointed my great aim, and I then swore, as he had saved his father, I would reach himself ;—this night he felt an Irish arm, and, ha ! ha ! ha ! I can die satisfied with my revenge !”

“ Dreadful and dire mistake ! ” groaned Lord Clancarron ; “ insatiate monster ! deeply hast thou erred ; learn, and yell it to thy kindred fiends—I was the man who interposed, and prevented thy sanguinary aim, I bade the hand of justice interfere—dost thou want more blood ? Come on—”

Mac Dermot staggered, shook in a new

torture; the barbed arrow of remorse, of eternal gnawing remorse, struck his heart, and the raging fires grew pale; he had thirsted for revenge, and now in burning blasts it recoiled upon himself; to fight had been his glory, but to *murder* was disgrace; pangs seized his vitals; frenzy seized his brain, and as the attendants, who had returned, attempted to take him, he burst suddenly from their grasp—
“ Think you, weak ones, MacDermot will give a gaping holiday, and die a spectacle upon a scaffold!—ha! ha! ha! ha!”

The laugh was ghastly, it curdled the blood;—a faint flash of light struck on the gloom—a report followed, and Mac Dermot was numbered with the dead.

CHAPTER VII.

THE riches of Major Mac Dermot had made many candidates to his favour, and busy tongues were ready to inform him of the intimacy which had subsisted between Fitz Ormond and Mr. De Dunstanville; and the satisfaction visible in his intelligent countenance on his return from the bloodless encounter, he attributed to some secret collusion between them, and he loaded the youth with the most bitter reproaches, and imprecated horrific wishes on his own head, if he ever more would hear of his name; a deed which left him heir to his vast fortune, he had destroyed, so that poor Fitz Ormond had only to remember what he might have been.

He was now further than ever removed from Eglantine, and that reflection was indeed a pang his bosom could not mitigate, nor his philosophy subdue, yet the dignity of innocence and a noble pride supported him, and, during a pause for breath in the fury of his raving kinsman, *without* one word, and *with* one look, he bowed, and quitted him for ever.

“ Off beggar! vile beggar! off from my sight !” cried the maniac, malignant in his fury.

Yet, no sooner was the beggar from his sight, than to wring him with remorse, rushing tides of his tenderness, cares and duty, overwhelmed his soul, and he darted after him, shrieking, “ My boy ! my boy !”

But the boy was gone—beyond recall—gone, and for ever.

His torture was redoubled by his valet assuring him Mr. Fitz Ormond had past the hours he was absent, alone, and in prayer ; and added, that it was young Mr. De Dunstanville who had given information at Bow Street, and prevented the duel taking place.”

The poor valet’s intention was good ; he not only wished to restore his young master to favour ; but knowing, from demonstration not to be doubted, that a gentleman had left Sir Geoffry’s house the evening before, and been traced to Bow Street, he thought it must be *the son* as the one most interested in Sir Geoffry’s safety.

A vengeful fire was consuming the vitals of Mac Dermot, and kindling a hell in his bosom, and with a demon’s passions, raging hot in his brain and heart ; he arrived

at De Dunstanville ; to avoid human interposition and prevention, he resolved to have no attendant nor confidant, therefore, wandering about, like the serpent in Paradise, for his opportunity, he learned from the tenantry, “ That their dear young Sir studied the stars among the ruins, every night ; and I warrant me now, (added the simple informer) his eyes go beyond the moon itself, there’s a rare blaze to night for him, and Sam Giles saw him with his long *scope* mounting the steps of the servantory not an hour ago.”

The heart of Mac Dermot palpitated with a new throb ; he quitted the peasant, put loaded pistols in his pocket, and hastened, with feet swift to shed blood, to the convent ruins.

The golden gleams of the declining sun were irradiating the building as he beheld

his innocent, unsuspecting victim seated within ; he entered, and Mr. De Dunstanville met the fiery glare of his dark rolling eye ; he started—a painful anticipation crossed his mind, but the dignity of conscious innocence imparted courage, and, in a voice calmly firm, he exclaimed—“ Major Mac Dermot !”

“ Yes ! Major Mac Dermot has found his way to De Dunstanville, and you !”

“ The road is very public, and I am always to be found ; have you, Sir, any commands for me ? I am expected—” he continued, rising to depart.

“ Perdition, by my arm, shall blast the expectation !” cried he, with awaking fury.

“ I have engagements, Major, and cannot be detained !” he would have passed him.

"Stop! your only road lies through my body; mine through yours!"

"Am I with a soldier, or an assassin?" demanded Mr. De Dunstanville.

"You are with Mac Dermot! and you shall not escape me."

"Escape you!" he repeated, with a fearless scorn, "be advised, we had better separate, some of my family may appear, and—"

"And before they *do*, take *that*, be a man, and let our business end."

He forced a pistol into Mr. De Dunstanville's hand—he threw it down.

"I have so many blessings, life is dear; —be more moderate, I never did you wrong!"

"'Tis false! false as hell! you informed the officers of justice, prevented my revenge!"

“ Major, by truth itself, you are deceived, I did not !”

“ Who did ?”

That, Mr. De Dunstanville now knew ; but *that* he would not say, and again he made an effort to leave him, when Mac Dermot, in the firmness of a terrible strength, grasped him by the arm, and together they struggled ; confusion ensued, till at length, by one boisterous effort, both were precipitated down the flight of steps, and were among the ruins of a cloister.

“ Defend yourself ! ” vociferated Mac Dermot ; “ nothing shall avail you, my rage is mortal, my determination death ! ”

“ Your life is valueless ! no wife would mourn, no child would weep for you ; — be wise Mac Dermot, be merciful to both, be merciful, and leave me.”

“ Never ! ” he cried, with gnashing teeth

and ghastly visage, never, I will have my vengeance, *liar*, I will have vengeance."

"Jane! my angel Jane, for thee—" and De Dunstanville shuddered in irrepressible agony.

"Yes liar—coward!"

"Perdition choke your words; foul mouthed ruffian!"

"Ah! you feel now; the sting reaches; coward then again, to keep your chilly courage hot—coward—coward—coward; and at each insulting repetition of the epithet, he pushed still nearer and nearer with the levelled pistol to his noble un vindictive bosom; till tortured beyond the endurance of a mortal, he seized the offered weapon; but ere he could examine it, or even respire one prayer to a witnessing God, the outrageous ruffian fired; the well aimed bullet lodged in the heart of De Dunstanville; he fell; the wound was

death ; the energies of a superior mind were chilling in the pang of dissolution ; the generous sensibilities of his upright soul were deadening, and every power was growing faint.

De Dunstanville was sought, De Dunstanville was found ; he received an angel's kiss, he received an angel's sigh ; they knew no separating pang ; they shed no widowed tear ; they speeded on their heavenly way together, and together they reached the purer habitations of a glorious, and an unending day.

When the infuriated Mac Dermot had banished the long cherished Fitz Ormond from his presence, he became a melancholy wanderer ; friendless and without a home ; unconnected, uninterested, and unendeared, in the peopled universe ; and feeling that without Eglantine life would

prove a blank not worth preservation, he resolved on entering the army ; the fatal circumstances that had occurred at the Abbey of De Dunstanville, had not reached his knowledge ; he had been in a remote western county, wandering a solitary unsocial, unnoticed thing ; a paper he never looked at, and with none he held intercourse. The world was in arms, he entered as a volunteer; but before he bade an everlasting farewell to the shores of Britain, he resolved to steal one last look of the worshipped Eglantine.

He had travelled on foot till within a few miles of De Dunstanville, when sinking beneath mental disquiet and excessive fatigue, he was seized with a fever, which confined him many days to bed ; and it was during the first week of his recovery, that a good natured apothecary, who had

attended him, liking nothing better than a glass of punch, except to retail all the village gossip while drinking it, seated himself by Fitz Ormond's arm chair with his beverage before him, and a wish within him to amuse his patient ; little supposing the humble being could be any way interested in events so important among people of importance, he detailed all the calamitous circumstances which had happened in Sir Geoffry's family.

A cold horror crept through his veins as the apothecary proceeded with his disastrous tale ; every sense was lost in mute agony ; and all he could feel was that earth bore not a greater wretch. The friend whom he loved with holy warmth, murdered by his paternal benefactor ; the innocent lady Jane cold and shrouded in her husband's bloody grave ; and their baby left without

a father or a mother. “ Eglantine, Eglantine,” he cried, “ be thou rich in felicities as thou art in virtues! Think not of the broken hearted Fitz Ormond, he will soon, very soon, be forgotten ; I feel my heart giving way, and my head will soon be low ; no tear will fall now from Eglantine for me, she is lost.”

Fitz Ormond felt a gloomy resolution nerve his heart, and next morning, being still too weak to walk, he ordered a post chaise for De Dunstanville.

“ Once more I will see the angel, and then—.”

On his arrival at a little country inn on the borders of the forest, he was obliged from weakness to rest a few hours, when ordering the chaise to be ready at a certain hour, he wandered forth, and entered the village ; his eye was attracted by an old

white-headed man, in the De Dunstanville livery, seated on a rustic bench with a flowing can, to which he invited Fitz Ormond, from pity as well as pleasure, for he looked pale and exhausted. “ Drink, Sir,” said he, “ you be right sure of welcome to my toast ; the De Dunstanville family ; we have had a sad dark night, but the Lord be blessed, the day dawns cheerly again ; Sir Geoffry is getting well, our late master’s young lady will have the lands, and to crown all, our own pretty flower, as we call Miss Eglantine, will now keep the commandments, and honour her father, and then her days will be long in the land, and Oh ! Amen ! Amen ! so be it !”

“ Eglantine ! Amen !” Fitz Ormond was electrified, he gasped, as a freezing fear crept through his veins.

“ How good you be to join my prayer,”

cried the old man, “ belike you have heard though, how we all feared, and it made Sir Geoffry mad, that our young Miss had a hankering after one Fitz Ormond, the bastard of the murderer of our dear young master.”

Fitz Ormond started from his seat.

“ Aye you may well start, Sir, the father went on his reverend knees to his daughter, it would have made a devil start to see that ; and he prayed her to take his blessing, and not give him her curse. Lord Clancarron he was dying for love of her—but ah the evil is all over now, the bells will ring to-night, and the bon-fires burn, and the *Thelamium* says, ‘ the Highland rose entwines its leaves with lovely Eglen-tine ;’—but you seem ill, Sir,—dear heart ? how pale you do look ! and now you do so shake like the ague—here, Dame Bridget,

a cup of hot wine for the gentleman—haste, haste you, we must be all well by midnight, to see the grand to-do, the chapel lighted with lamps of essence, the Thelamium sung, an ox roasted to-morrow, ale in buckets, wine in bowls, and all gay and glad again."

"Glad and gay again!" repeated Fitz Ormond abstractedly—"Yes, Sir,—so take the cup to Miss Eglantine's health; and here," he added, tossing off a glass himself, "happiness to the bride! when the clock strikes twelve Eglantine will be Lady Clancarron."

The cup fell, and in a tempest of agonized feeling, Fitz Ormond darted from their sight.

"Only one step," cried the poor wretch; his reason was gone, and he stood on the brink of a foaming river,—"only

one," and he gaspt the name of Eglantine, and he had been the next moment—where—Oh ! God, where !

" Your honour, you have forgotten me sure," and Fitz Ormond felt his arm grasped ; he started, yet the voice was neither deep nor sepulchral ; the figure neither tall nor spectral ; old Adam had fears for a fellow being's wits, and the postilion had fears for his money, and so Fitz Ormond had been pursued ; he turned to his preserver ; " I thank you, you may leave me."

" May I ! But I came, your honour for —"

" Do not name it, no do not friend, I cannot bear it."

" Bear it !" cried the fellow, " Can you pay it ?"

"Pay it, my good lad? what can pay you for a human being's soul?"

"I can't exactly tell that, your honour, I only wants to be paid for my horses hire."

A moments reflection told Fitz Ormond, each had misunderstood the other; he felt confused, abashed, and ashamed that he had betrayed his purpose; but recovering, he paid the demand, gave the fellow a crown for himself, and ordered him to have the chaise two hours hence at the turn-pike gate.

Fitz Ormond's intentions were now indefinite as indefinable, yet one was strong and uncontrollable; to behold Eglantine—and there intention ceased, it could go no farther; but where, or how, or when?

He was ruminating, when accosted by a

peasant boy with “ Have you, please Sir, seen a big dog? The Lord at the abbey offers five guineas for un, for the bride likes un so mainly ; I seed her go to yon mauslum her ownself, for she never fears the goblins nor the ghostesses there, not she.”

“ Is,—— is the bride there now ?” asked Fitz Ormond, his heart palpitating with the wildest throbs.

“ Belike no,” replied the boy, “ as she must be married to-night.”

To tread on the earth trodden by Eglen-tine, was something, and Fitz Ormond hastened on his way to the monument erected to the memory of De Dunstanville and his Jane.

He drew near the hallowed spot, where a mother’s first throb, became a mother’s dying throe ; a mysterious gloomy stillness

involved all around, and a low chilly wind was sighing through the trees; a widowed ring-dove from its solitary nest in pitious cooings blended with the evening's breeze, and the melancholy sound of distant waters, all mingling, formed a concert well suited to Fitz Ormond's feelings.

The streaming splendour of the full moon, guided his aching eye to the low unhonoured stone, which marked a greatly sinning mortal's grave; it was Mac Dermot's; it was without the verge of holy ground; his dust was refused a resting place within the holy pale, for it was the drear abode of one who had been a murderer, and a self-murderer.

Fitz Ormond stood aghast, his heart swelled, and with frantic effort he twined his arms round the recording stone; and,

if in human strength, would have torn it from its earthy bed. The tumult of feeling was almost too much for his enfeebled frame, and he burst into tears. “Yes,” he cried, pressing the unconscious stone ; “low and dishonoured as is thy dust, deformed with crimes, and perished, yet shall one tear of gratitude bedew thy relics,farewell,lost being—for ever farewell.”

He turned towards the grove of cypress which embosomed the monument of De Dunstanville ; with awe he entered the hallowed sanctuary ; a low breath reached his ear ; it might be the night wind ; but he listened, and heard a deepened sigh, yet he feared nothing ; he heard his own name; “Fitz Ormond ! Oh! Fitz Ormond !”

He started.

“ Farewell !—a long, a last farewell, too dearly loved Fitz Ormond ! Spirit of De

Dunstanville, spirit of my murdered brother, open thy cold arms, open and save thy sister from a father's curse, and from Clancarron's bridal bed, thy stiffening arms were Heaven."

The bells from De Dunstanville church struck up a merry peal—"That sound is the doom of peace ; Oh ! Clancarron, any refuge for a wretch, any but thy honest bosom !—"

"Find it here for ever, then!" and Eglen-tine De Dunstanville was folded in the arms of Fitz Ormond.

"Here, thou blessed one, in the fond sanctuary of a heart so pure, so warm, so holy in its passion for thee, that angels may feel, and angels own it."

Eglantine had quitted the festivities of the nuptial evening, escaped from the ardent wishes of Clancarron, to pay a last

despairing visit to her brother's tomb, and she had yielded so much, that no one ventured to oppose her melancholy purpose. She now reclined within her lover's arms ; she raised her head, and fixed her eyes upon his face, and shuddering, would have struggled to be gone; but he held her with tender force.

“ Oh ! Eglantine,” he cried, in strong impassioned agony ; “ I know all, I have heard all, when the clock strikes twelve—”

Eglantine groaned, and wrung her cold hands in the anguish of thought, she fixed her burning eyes upon him.

“ Fitz Ormond, tempt not my shrinking soul.”

“ Life of my life,” he cried, “ be merciful, spare me ! Bethink thee, my blessed one, only one moment’s pause, and gulphs divide us for a long for ever ; only one

'moment more and barriers terrible and eternal rise between us, then spare me, spare me, blessed one, spare thy beloved self!"

She cast upon him an unutterable look, her hands were clasped, her lips closed, and her poor heart felt bursting with conflicting agony.

A father's love and blessing ; a father's bitter hate, and utter reprobation, rushed rapidly through her burning brain ; and she shivered in the pangs of irresolution ; thought reverted to a scene of horror, her feet pressed the sod, which murder had wetted with a brother's blood, shed by the reputed father of him who was now tempting her shuddering soul from its first duties ; fearful images rushed over her shrinking mind, and a father's blessing would have conquered, again she would

have been his own ; but her uplifted eye caught a glimpse of the lights as they gleamed in the chapel windows.

“ Oh ! Eglantine, these lights, these lights ! they shine for your nuptials, they shine for my death, your bridal hour, is the signal for—Oh ! Eglantine !”

Eglantine groaned ; she shook, her knees smote each other, cold dews of bitter conflict were dripping from her brows, and every aching sense grew dull. In that moment Lord Clancarron was seen at the entrance of the grove, a few steps would reach her, she would be no longer her own, she would be his, he came to seek his bride, to lead her to the altar, to tear her from Fitz Ormond, to make her a wretch for ever.

He advanced ; his foot was heard among

the long grass, he was near, he called upon her name.

“ Eglantine ! my soul, my bride, my Eglantine !”

A darkening mist dimmed her sight ; the fearful throbs of her heart were only heard ; her senses receded, she staggered, and gasped, sunk into the opening arms of Fitz Ormond and—poor Eglantine !

Little more has to be added ; the daughter of Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville left his arms, even on her bridal night, and wedded with the adopted son of a murderer ; but she loved, and was a woman, and when she raised her head from the bosom of her lover, she was in a post-chaise, and many miles from De Dunstanville Abbey.

CHAPTER VIII.

SLOW and doubtful had been Sir Geoffry's recovery after the fatal death of his son and daughter - in - law; but he was a Christian, and confidence in the Deity tranquillized his mind, and fortified his soul to wait the developement of that great plan, which will prove that, from the fall of a sparrow to the wreck of a world, all is for ultimate good, and leading to an eternal perfection. In the smiles of the promising infant, Jane, he found the sweetest solace, and looked forward with serene delight when she would assert her parents' rights, and become the bright representative of their virtues.

The heavy gloom, which for a long time

bordered on derangement, was gradually cheered by another hope ; ardently he desired to behold his Eglantine the wife of Lord Clancarron ; but cheerless and unendearing was the sentiment she felt for him ; yet considering Fitz Ormond lost, and to please her father, the melancholy, half heart-broken being, yielded a passive consent ; his lordship received her acquiescence with a rapture, which, though delicacy to her feelings repressed, shone forth in his intelligent eye, and, kneeling before her, he vowed to watch her wishes with a love so pure and holy, that it should deserve some soft return ; "I will deserve you, worshipped Eglantine," he cried ; "and when did your soft nature refuse a smile of approbation to desert ?"

" Oh ! my cousin—my—" she drew a lengthened sigh, " Oh ! that I could attune

my soul to yours, that I could regulate my heart, and be what you deserve! Alas! the sentiment is cold which duty offers, which gratitude feels; yet, dear Clancarron I will be all I can, and in time may deserve your love."

She was candid, mild, and generous, and pleased in the idea that if she could not feel the wild tumults of joy, neither could she experience the acute pangs of misery; and on the day she was to resign her future fate to Lord Clancarron's care, the idea of being his wife, so far from partaking of former agony, was accompanied by a feeling, pure, calm, dignified, and holy.

It had been Sir Geoffry's wish, thinking the ceremony would be more solemn and impressive, to have it celebrated at midnight, and the poor unanticipating bride, taking advantage of his Lordship, and

her father being engaged with the lawyers, went forth to weep one more sister's tear upon her brother's hallowed grave.

Eglantine's absence was soon known, and caused strange and wild alarms ; she was sought, but never found ; but the particulars of her elopement and with whom, were soon discovered ; poor Clancarron, nearly distracted with boding fears, yet unapprehensive of what really had occurred, flew himself towards the ruins ; when he encountered the young peasant whom he had employed to seek the lost dog ; his words transfixed him to the spot ; " Your honours Lordship, the dog is safe ; but Miss her ownself is gone off with a young Squire Fitz Ormond." Clancarron was beyond the reach of comfort ; Eglantine was lost ; lost to him ; to the world ; to

herself—to her father, and to that fair report which maiden honour treasures;—that was a pang beyond the rest.

On his return to the abbey, he found Sir Geoffry pacing the hall with the infant Jane clasped in his arms, as if fearful of losing her too, and crying, with wild anticipating dread, as his still weak mind reverted to former scenes, “Is the fiend come again among us? Did you see him? I feel him *here*,” and Sir Geoffry looked fearfully around as he pressed his own agonised bosom, “aye, I feel it here.”

“My uncle! my father! I feel.”

“You feel!—what?”

“An angel’s loss.”

“Is she dead?”

Sir Geoffry’s voice was dreadful.

“No, not dead, yet lost.”

Sir Geoffry’s look was terrible, bolts of

fire felt darting at his heart ; his brain, it was bursting, and while internal convulsions empurpled his lips—a name detested and interdicted fell from them.

Clancarron was mute.

It was reiterated as a question.

“ Fitz Ormond ?”

“ I would not name the name that you have spoken ; yet be calm,” and the fond forsaken Clancarron clasped his hands, while burning tears stole down his ashy cheeks, “ be calm !”

Sir Geoffry was calm, quite calm ; it was that awful predictive calm which precedes the rising tempest ere it bursts ; he felt a daughter’s fall from duty, honour, happiness ; and his wrath was deep, determined, and most deadly ; he resigned the baby “ Angel of an angel leave these arms, thy pure form shall never be contami-

nated by one vindictive, one unhallowed breath ; be thou ever blessed, and blessing !”

He took Clancarron’s arm.

“ Lead on.”

“ My gracious uncle,” said the youth, shrinking from he knew not what, “ whither would you go ? Where lead me ?”

“ Do you fear ? Only to my son’s, to your sister’s grave—are you reluctant ?”

“ Dearest Sir, take rest, what would you do there ?”

“ Pray !”

“ Not now, what ever purpose,”—he interrupted him repeating,

“ Purpose—yes, I have a purpose, a father’s heart has sent it to heaven ; a father’s lips shall register it on earth.”

They went forth, and took the winding

path leading to the hallowed sanctuary. The look, the step, the manner, all were calm, and imposed obedience ; his eyes were cast on the earth, and rage seemed extinguished in the darkened gloom of impenetrable thought.

The morning was breaking ; the clouds were rolling dark and solemn ; and a pale watery sun-beam gleamed on the shadowy scenery of the woods ; but soon it sunk again, extinguished in the darkness of a thundery sky ; a melancholy wind was rustling through the trees, and resounded through the gloomy aisles of the desolated fabric they were entering.

They had reached the mansions of the dead ; in the remote corner the low stone which marked Mac Dermot's grave caught the father's eye ; he approached it, his blood curdled with horror ; Clancarron's

congealed with apprehension ; one step more, they reached it, and Sir Geoffry, grasping his hand, cried, “ Behold *the home*, behold the father of Eglantine De Dunstanville ; of her who left the sacred shelter of my bosom, the holy pillow of honourable love, for the vile offspring of a brother’s murderer ! my child, my child, oh my child ! ” Tears gushed forth, and ran down his venerable face, and falling on the earth, he continued for a time lost in a tender, a relenting agony ; had the lost Eglantine heard him it had riven her heart ; had she heard him it would have done more, riven the image of Fitz Ormond from that heart ; but the hour of grace had closed ; she had been the child of disobedience, the daughter of reprobation, and the voice of peace was never more to reach her ear.

Sir Geoffry was now kneeling, he raised his eyes, his spirit was in heaven, “ Great and all governing God ! who promises to the parent’s prayer a power strong, binding, and blessing, as thine own immutable decrees, enter the hidden recesses of my soul, a forsaken father’s soul, and mark the vengeance, mark my vengeance ! record it in thine everlasting annals ! and let the ministering beings who perform thy mighty will, speed it to this daughter’s heart ! let it follow her through every lane of life, in her rising up, and laying down, and be it about all her ways.

“ When she kneels in prayer, may she feel it strike upon her ear ! when sick and when in sorrow, may she feel it !—may it be with her shrinking spirit on the bed of death ! and when the dark and narrow house receives her poor remains, may it

follow her even into thy great presence ! then let her fully feel it, through eternal ages, in eternal worlds, feel a father's forgiveness!"

A seraphic fire had shone in his eyes, and every aching sense felt the softening influence of the mercy he had awarded to a sinning child.

The gracious sounds entranced the generous soul of Clancarron, and deserted and forsaken as he was, so pure was his passion, that enraptured, he cried, " My blessed uncle ! the wanderer shall return ! she —— "

Clancarron was interrupted.

" Never."

And Sir Geoffry's look was decisive, was final, " The christian," he added, " has performed the christian's duty ; the father will support the father's dignity ;

she has given herself a protector, and he has a right to her dower, I hope he will give her happiness ; I see her no more, hear of her no more, she is a stranger to my blood, and with me is, as if she had never been."

Eglantine had her fortune, and she also had her father's forgiveness ; but that father was firm, he never did see her, never would hear of her : she felt—what was it Eglantine did not feel !—the father had forgiven, but heaven had not forgotten ; in the annals of mercy a parent's pardon may be enrolled, and when in the realms of mercy it may be felt, but a withering influence follows violated duty, and prayer from the lips of disobedience is unacceptable, and unapproachable to God.

Till too late to rectify the evils occa-

sioned by the opinion, Sir Geoffry had believed, (as he was informed,) that Fitz Ormond was the natural son of Mac ermot, else poor Eglantine might have been welcomed to his arms as a daughter ; she and peace, alas ! had parted for ever ; sorrow was quick in following her steps, and only in an early, and obscure grave, did the ill-destined daughter of Sir Geoffry find refuge from the evils of life.

CHAPTER IX.

JANE DE DUNSTANVILLE's education had been directed by Mrs. Fortrose, a lady possessing the gentlest manners, the most undeviating principles, a superior and cultivated understanding, and mistress of the accomplishments, which give a brilliant lustre to the virtues; for this lady, Jane felt a filial reverence and affection, and under her maternal care, her pupil grew a little wonder.

To change the air, and vary the pleasures for his darling, though Sir Geoffry himself had never quitted the abbey since his son's death, every season Jane and her friend were sent to some of the fashionable resorts, where her talents had the advan-

tage of the first masters; but the summer that Jane attained her thirteenth year, Mrs. Fortrose had been invited by an opulent relative, to pass some months in Sussex, and as she could not be separated from her *eleve*; Jane, delighted with the excursion, accompanied her.

Among the guests assembled at the hospitable table of Mr. Ponsonby, appeared a youth of high fashion, named Sir Henry Egerton; he fluttered round the little heiress continually, in the hope of having an invitation to the abbey, when he hoped his irresistible graces would plead his cause, and by progressively pleasing her, at length secure her his own; girl like, the young Jane was gratified with his attentions, and she really would have requested Mrs. Fortrose to give the invitation he so ardently desired, when an occurrence happened,

which closed every avenue to her little beating heart against him, and made it feel all it could feel for a poor helpless soul, whom nobody knew, and nobody cared for.

Accompanied by Mrs. Fortrose, Sir Henry, and her little darling pug, Wouski, in the evening of an oppressive and sultry day, she went out to enjoy the cool and reviving breezes wafted from a beautiful river, which, meandering through the pleasure grounds, lost itself in a large sheet of water at the base of a lofty rock that sublimely enriched the perspective from Mr. Ponsonby's mansion.

While Jane busied herself making a garland of the wild roses, which grew in profusion around her, for her favourite Wouski's neck, Sir Henry, seated on the grass at her feet, gallantly swore "he should cer-

tainly one day hide the little witch, and steal her place."

" You need not," cried the lively girl, sportively ; " for I often take Wouski in my arms, and you know you can never come there."

There was something in this answer, though spoken *en badinage*, that made the baronet uneasy, and with a smile, that most assuredly did not brighten his countenance, he changed the subject by observing, " He wondered Mr. Ponsonby allowed the vulgar to walk about his grounds.

" See, Mrs. Fortrose, I vow there are parish boys, and beggarly reptiles, even crossing our path!"

Jane raised her eyes as he spoke, and they fell on a pale emaciated, ragged figure, who stood gazing on the water a few paces from them.

"And how good Mr. Ponsonby is," replied Jane, still looking on the pitiable being with increasing interest; "how very, very good, to give the poor and humble such a pleasure. Who is that dejected creature?" said she, whispering a parish lad, as she pointed to the object attracting her notice.

"Only beggar boy."

The appellation was felt; he turned round, and his full, dark, heavy eye fixed on Jane; but again it fell.

"Beggar boy is not his name;" and Jane insensibly drew nearer to him.

"No, no, Miss, Hildy Wildy, we call him, but since he fell sick, and could not work, we call him beggar boy."

Jane's hand was in her little bag, a tear in her eye, and her heart on her lip, when her favourite Wouski, going too near the

brink, fell down, and hung suspended on the branching trees which grew among the craggs.

Jane screamed; her dog looked up in her face and howled ;—boy after boy sneaked off ; and every instant the poor animal was falling lower and lower.

“ My dog ! my dog ! now Sir Henry, dear, good Sir Henry ! now, as you love me, go down and save my Wouski—save my Wouski !” and Jane took his hand and pressed it within her own :—“ You will save my dog !”

“ Quick ! you beggar boy there ! here is a shilling, a crown for you !” cried the brave Sir Henry ; “ Bring the dog—here is a crown !”

The beggar looked up ; something of a flush tinged his pallid cheek ; but he moved not.

" You rascal!" reiterated Sir Henry,
" Go for the dog ! I'll have you flogged
—flayed if you don't!"

Jane darted forward herself.

" Hildy ! beggar !" she gasped, and her pretty hands were folded in supplication :
" Dear—dear Hildy——!"

The next moment, Hildy was seen scrambling over the precipice ;—he reached the dog, and grasped it, but the branch giving way, he and the favourite fell together, and sunk into the deep ; he was seen to rise—he sunk,—but he could swim a little, and again he appeared above the water, holding the drenched Wouski over his head.

Jane rent the air with her cries—her dog, her Wouski was forgotten, and " The boy ! the boy ! the poor boy !" was all her lips could utter ; at last, the beggar

was perceived to rise at another point of the rock, where the water was shallow ; he made one last effort, clung to some impending branches, and in the next instant, he lay extended with Wouski clasped to his cold bosom.

Breathless with suspensive agony, Jane flew through the winding path which led to the spot where the poor boy lay ;— Wouski struggled in vain for freedom, the arm that held her was convulsed—he seemed himself in the arms of death ; a crowd gathered round them, and restoratives were applied.

“ Dear, dear beggar ! noble, good Hildy ! look up, look up ! ” she cried, her own beautiful hands wringing the water from his matted hair, and rubbing his temples.

He opened his eyes, and they fixed on her pale lovely face ; in ecstacy she pressed his

head with innocent joy to her bosom; and in the next moment, conscious of something nameless, she started up, and bursting into tears, threw herself into the arms of Mrs. Fortrose, and hid her blushing face in her neck.

“Wouski! Wouski!” she cried, sobbing; a tumult of strange sensations swelled her heart, and she could add no more.

Sir Henry approached her with tender enquiries.

She received him with contempt:—
“What you love best, Sir, I see very well!” said she, coldly; “Now, dear mamma, let us attend to this noble boy; he *did* listen to my begging, and he shall never beg again himself, I long to assure him of—of—”

She stopt, for the beggar boy was now

recovered ; but shivering in his wet rags, and, as if anxious to conceal them, he bent to Wouski, saying, " Poor little thing ! "

" Mamma and I wish to see you home ; " said Jane, in the sweetest voice of compassion ; " and never to let you beg again, or be called names by bad unfeeling boys ; are you able to walk home, good Hildy ? "

Hildy covered his face with his hands, and burst into tears, for the voice of kindness was a stranger to his ear ;—he shook his head.

" Where do you live, good boy ? "

He threw his eyes around—he could not speak.

" Where do you sleep ? "

He drew a deep sigh.

" In the burial ground."

" God of heaven ! " said Mrs. Fortrose, " in the burial ground ! "

"Yes, by my mother, on her grave;
I have no other bed, no other home now."

"Oh mamma! mamma!" cried Jane.

Mrs. Fortrose was affected, interested.

"What is your name, poor youth; to whom do you belong?"

"Nobody owns me, I belong to no one."

"But your name?"

A burning red flushed his cheek—his bosom seemed to swell, and his tongue faltered as he replied, "Hildebrande Fitz Ormond!"

Mrs. Fortrose started; she turned pale, and sunk into a reverie. Jane's heart beat as if it would have burst through her innocent bosom, and she took his hand and pressed it between her own, as she looked at Mrs. Fortrose; but, "Oh mamma! mamma!" was all she could utter.

Mrs. Fortrose knew the family history,

yet had never heard of the ill-fated Eglen-tine's return to England, nor that she had a son ; indeed, it had been reported, and was generally believed, that she and her husband had died at sea in their passage to America, soon after their marriage.

Who Hildebrande's mother was, had never been known in the village ; she bequeathed some papers to her son, with much solemnity, before she died ; her few effects had been seized by a relentless landlord, for the rent of her cottage, and with them these papers, but not before her son had perused them ; his grandfather, therefore, he had learned to fear, to almost hate, and since his mother's death, he had worked for his daily bread.

Mrs. Fortrose had him clothed, and placed him in a farm house until she re-

ceived Sir Geoffry's directions respecting him.

The indignant sentiment he testified towards his grandfather, and indeed for his cousin Jane too, when he heard such a being existed, induced them not to farther wound a spirit which seemed proud even in rags, but as he believed Jane to be the daughter of Mrs. Fortrose, and a great favourite with his grandfather, he was suffered to remain in that idea, and as *Mary Fortrose*, Hildedrande looked up to *Jane De Dunstanville* as to a guardian, and preserving angel.

Mrs. Fortrose immediately wrote a full and circumstantial account of the discovery she had made, to Sir Geoffry; described his daughter's sufferings, how she had lived, how she had died, and in what condition her son had been discovered. His

darling also addressed him on the subject, and, with all the glowing energy of an artless nature, gē erously described the dawnings of superior character he evinced, and gave his every virtue, as it rose on her own poetical imagination, the most vivid colouring; “ he is so brave, so gentle, so grateful, so feeling, and so good, (she wrote) and has so much of the pride you approve, dear, dear, grand papa ; for he disdained taking money though hungry and naked, yet hazarded his dear life to save a little dog, *my* little dog, *your* Jane’s little dog ; and he has such beautiful features, such fine curling hair,—it curls, dear, dear, grand-papa, it curls like your’s—but I have so much to say, that I long to be with you, and then, when I sing and play

“ The banks and braes of bonnie Doon,”

and kiss you, and sing again our own dear Scotch

" Todlen hame,"

then I know who will come over the braes,
and todlen hame, and make Jane happy,
and dear — dear — but every body will
then be happy."

What Sir Geoffry's feelings and determinations were, will be known hereafter; and, in the mean time, the reader may with me retrace the scenes of anguish which led the once admired and beloved Eglen-tine to her lowly village grave.

CHAPTER X.

THE reprobated Eglantine's name had never been mentioned after her elopement, within the walls of De Dunstanville ; it became as if forgotten by all, except him, who in the hour of blissful expectation had been forsaken ; in that bosom, the remembrance of her gentle virtues never died, she was there embalmed among the holiest thoughts, and even, when to gratify a noble, yet broken-hearted declining mother, Lord Clancarron married a city heiress, her fair image shone, and sat unrivalled ; his mother was a high-born Caledonian—his union preserved the ancient lands of Clancarron from swelling the pride of upstart ignorance, with no pretension but

to gold, and he became husband to one who sighed for a coronet.

Lord Clancarron possessed a mind capable of giving and receiving happiness ; in Eglantine De Dunstanville, he had found congenial virtues ; but alas ! the refined energies of her mild spirit were not for him ; she had abandoned him ; and he felt he was abandoned ; he knew the ruin impending over his fallen fortune ; he knew his mother's despair ; he knew the chilling indifference of his own heart towards his bride ; he contrasted the fair form, the gentle manner, the softened look, the elegant mind, and the chastened gaiety of the lost Eglantine, with the forward manners and affected dignity of her destined to his arms, and shrank from the comparison ; his peace was every way wrecked,

yet he performed his duty as a husband, a son, and a father.

His first enquiries, on his arrival in London, were for his fugitive cousin ; he was resolved to see her, to assure her of unending attachment, and in friendship to her husband, prove the disinterested sentiment she had inspired.

Alas ! Lord Clancarron's fond and generous intentions were frustrated ; poor Eglantine was doomed never more to hear the soothing accent of friendship.

Oh ! children of disobedience, learn, and be warned, that when implanting the thorn of regret in a parent's bosom, you place a scorpion in your own, that will sting through every fibre of the heart, the venom will circulate through every throbbing vein, and even dart its forked tongue to after generations, and from the lips of

children's children, speak the malediction that has issued from a father's and a mother's heavy heart.

Eglantine's fortune was placed in the hands of a banker, who failing, reduced them to beggary. With the miserable remnant her husband procured a commission, and the regiment being ordered on foreign service, the fond and faithful wife would listen to no dissuasives, he was her whole world, she would accompany him ; and they embarked on board a transport, which was attacked by a privateer a few days after they had left the Channel. The contest was fierce and sanguinary ; young Fitz Ormond fell, and the extended arms of his distracted wife, who had rushed in horror on the deck, received the bleeding body.

He looked in her face, “ Oh ! my Eglen-tine !”

“ We are together,” said she, laying her cheek on the gushing wound, and clasping him close, “ and now we shall both die ;” a wild smile appeared on her ashy cheek, as she added, “ yes, and toge-ther.” Her innocent spirit was departing ; she felt on the verge of peace, on the verge of glory, every object receded from her sight, and she had died ; but there came a savage hand and dragged her husband’s body from her enfeebled grasp, a hoarse voice was heard roaring, “ Clear the decks !” Her eyes fell again, and she beheld the form she so adored cast overboard.

Eglantine saw no more ; “ Eather ! fell from her cold white lips ; the foaming waves were now rolling high, shrieks of fear, and shrieks of death, were heard to

mingle with the winds, groan answered groan, the thundering cannon was still, its muttering grew faint, and the bloody business of the fateful hour was passing away.

By rude and roughening hands the form of Eglantine was raised ; her cheeks were deathly ; a bluey paleness shaded every wrung feature, and the soft lustre of an angel eye was quenched in the dimming tears of wrecking despair. — — — —

The ship was retaken and towed back to an English port, and poor Eglantine yet survived to taste the cup of human suffering ; she had no husband, she had no father, but her father in heaven ; and when she was landed, but for a poor Highland soldier, she had expired unnoticed and unknown ; he wrapped her lovely form in his plaid, it

was almost her only covering, and honest Donald Cameron watched her with a parent's care; many a tear he shed upon her burning hands, and many a prayer he offered up for her recovery; and when her fever abated, and he learned she was related to the house of Clancarron, Donald swore he would perish or preserve her; and Donald kept his word. He had obtained a furlough, and was attending her to London, where it was her intention to solicit Lord Clancarron's mediation with her father; for though Eglantine's love and holiest wishes were all in heaven with her husband, a throbbing something within strongly urged her to preserve existence till it should behold the light. When she hoped to give it to her father, and then resign the weary load of being.

A brilliant locket round Eglantine's

neck had escaped the plunderers, and the sale of it was the poor wanderer's support ; overcome with excessive fatigue, again a nervous fever seized the frame of Eglen-tine, and reduced her to the verge of death ; who could have forsaken her in such a moment ? Not poor untutored Donald : again he watched her night and day, and when the last shilling was ex-pended, he could only fight for himself,— but beg for her.

A poor curate, who on sixty pounds a year, supported an infirm wife and eight children, listened to *his tale* instead of prudence, and received the sick wanderer into his own humble home ; and Donald, whose leave had long expired, was preparing to depart and rejoin his regiment, when a party seized him as a deserter ; and, notwithstanding, his defence which

truth made, and humanity should have accepted, a young officer, more proud of his cockade than his character, and more vain of wearing a sword, than performing its duty, had the honest souled Donald tried by a court martial, and he was sentenced to receive two hundred lashes.

A short digression to conclude the soldier's tale, will be pardoned by the gentle heart ; the poor fellow, proud and uncomplaining, sustained the degrading punishment, and when the commanding officer, under whom Donald had long served, enquired why, and how so brave a fellow as he had often proved himself, after having escaped his enemies could desert his friends ? Donald bowed low, and told his simple tale ; it wrung a tear from the eye of his superior, he shook the honest being by the hand, and next morning, in the face of

the regiment, gave him a halbert as a recompence for his humanity ; the approbation of his colonel was a cordial to his broken spirit ; the stripes on his back were forgotten ; but alas ! they had entered poor Donald's *heart*, there remembrance had tarried till it mortified every manly fibre ; he looked up in the face of his colonel, grasped his halbert, staggered, fell, and expired ; Donald had had his blow —he survived it, but he could not survive the remembrance.

The pang of knowing his fate was spared to poor Eglantine ; she never was told how fatal his humanity had proved to her humble benefactor ; and under the roof of the poor curate, and in the humane arms of his wife, she gave existence to a son.

New sensations throbbed at the young

mother's heart as she gazed on the cherub image of her husband ; and to preserve him, became a dear consideration, her child inspired exertion ; and during the declining health of the curate's wife, she superintended his little household, and became the instructress of his children, she was their only consolation, and in their simple benevolence she found encouragement, comfort, and composure. From this habitation she addressed Lord Clancarron, and inclosed a supplication to her father, dictated by the heart of contrition ; she detailed all she had endured, how she had been preserved, her husband's fate, her child's birth, and her present dependent condition. This pacquet never reached her cousin ; the fate of the vessel in which she had embarked, with her own and husband's death affectingly described, had been

in the papers, and proved the doomsday of Clancarron's peace. He recovered from the first shock ; but the fine fibres which attach the soul to life were broken, and shunning all society, and indifferent to every one, and every thing, Lord Clancarron was hastening fast to the grave. The heart of Lady Clancarron was mean, jealous, and vindictive ; she knew her husband's attachment to his cousin ; beheld the effects her reported death had on his health and reason, yet concealed that she was in existence ; the letters fell into her hands, and she inhumanly suppressed them, while the hapless writer, attributing his silence to her father's obduracy, and his own contempt, sunk again into despondency, when the calamities of the curate's family recalled her to exertion.

In one week the scarlet fever carried

off the curate's wife and five children, and reduced himself to such a state of debility, that, unable to perform his duty, the delicate fingers of Eglantine were obliged to labour for the poor survivors. Famine was now fast encompassing the whole wretched group, and the pleading looks of the perishing creatures imploring her for bread, inspired a courage, or rather desperation, which determined her to personally entreat Lord Clancarron's mercy.

On her arrival in London, one solitary shilling was her whole worldly possession ; and frantic with strong and nameless forebodings, the poor forlorn fugitive hurried from the inn where the stage had set her down, and with her baby in her arms, near two years old, she bent her feeble steps to the house Lord Clancarron did inhabit in her happier days.

She knocked at the door, and on it being opened by an old woman, in tremulous accents, she enquired if Lord Clancarron still lived there, and was within?

"No," was the reply; "all the gentlefolks were in the country; that Lord Clancarron did not visit there himself, but his Lady sometimes did."

"His Lady!" repeated Eglantine, putting her hand to her head, "It is so; then in his felicity my miseries were unheeded."

She enquired no more; but turning from the door, and insensible where she wandered, she reached St. James's Park. She gave her child some milk and cake, and allayed her own thirst with the wholesome beverage; and thus was her last shilling expended.

It was December, and the day soon

drew in, the darkness of a chilling night was fast approaching, and she had not where to lay her head ; the sweet baby smiled innocently in her face ; yet he felt cold, but she nestled him in her bosom, and he dropped asleep, till the rude mirth of some passing soldiers awoke him ; he stretched out his little hands, and again would have sunk into quiet slumber ; but she started up, and wrapping him in her robe, ran rather than walked, till she gained the street, when leaning against a wall she burst into tears of uncontrollable agony.

“ My child, my child, you will die ! ” she cried, pressing the innocent to her cold bosom ; “ without food, without a shelter, you will die.—My father ! My father ! Oh Fitz Ormond ! your child will die, and for want—will die for want ! ”

She now staggered onwards, till a burial ground appeared befor her. She laughed. " This is right, child we are at home ; *your* father will meet us—my father—no—no—no, he will not."

She looked up, the antique spires were lost in the darkening mist. She was near Westminster abbey ; the wind was passing cold over the huge stones which paved the path of Eglantine ; all was silent within the sacred pile, and its inhabitants still as if they had never known a troubled world.

A door was open leading to the inner cloisters, and seemed to offer a shelter for the night ; she entered, and had sunk into a nook, when a heavy toll echoed through the fabric and made her start ; involuntarily she shrieked, and the next moment in tones too rude for the hallowed fane, a

man holding a lantern to her face, bade her “troop with her bundle, or he would give her to the watch.”

His menace was unintelligible to the poor sufferer, yet she knew it was a command to be gone; she crossed her arms over her baby as he clung to her breast, and looking in the man’s face, with a look that might have softened savage nature, she faintly said, “This night, only this one? My child—he will perish in the damp air,—only this night.”

In accents coarser than before, the fellow repeated, “Out trumpery with gibberish on your tongue, and not a penny in your pocket,—out I say.”

Resigned in spirit she now obeyed: “The street,” she said, “we can _____” the rest died on her cold lip, and every

want, every horror sunk to nothingness in the voice that next assailed her.

She heard her infant's lips move as if parched, and in his lisping way ask bread.

She hurried through the streets again ; her demeanour was wild, her gestures frantic, her sobs convulsive, and though her brain burned, her poor frame shivered in the blast ; she laughed, and oh her laugh was fearful ; but she could not weep ; often she begged, but no one heeded her ; at last nature felt giving way, a giddiness seized her, her knees shook, and her hands feeling nearly nerveless she had with her infant fallen, when a poor child of beggary held her up, and assisted her to the steps of a house, and there she left her to pursue her own sad occupations.

The chills of despair were shaking her to nothing, yet for her baby she held

out a wasted hand, and cried, “ A little bread for my child, only a little bread ; my father’s door—my father’s heart, both are shut on me—my husband—I had a husband ! oh my child—my child—he will die—christian only a little, see how white he looks ! oh my child, he will die ;”

All hurried on, no one heeded her cry ;
“ Death — oh my heart !”

The little feeble hands of her child were clinging round her neck, and his cold soft lip was pressed to her famished sunken cheek ; he moaned, his lisping voice was heard again ; its sounds sent maddening torture into every fibre of the mother’s breast.

“ *Ma-ma, give me, Ma-ma !*”

“ Yes,” she cried, gasping, and starting up in frenzy, while terrible thoughts were rising within her, “ I will give thee—give

thee—" but in the instant of her last dreadful thought a carriage drew up to the door, and a gentleman alighted.

She was impeded for a moment in her purpose, for he ascended the steps ; and as she sunk again, her trembling fingers grasped his knees. She raised her eyes, her dim and burning eyes, and fixed them on his face ; the glare of a blazing lamp fell full upon it, and she knew him. She drew a convulsive gasp.

" See !" said she, shivering in all a mother's agonies, in all a mother's despair. " See *my baby*, see his looks, he wants—he hungers—Eglantine's baby hungers !"

She held up the babe in her wasted hands, as she repeated, " he hungers, he hungers."

Eglantine had no common form, it now appeared uncommon indeed, and touched

with something not earthly ; her tones penetrated the stranger's soul ; it awakened strange feelings, and he gave her his purse ; but in the act of giving it, he had to bend towards the poor suppliant, and in that moment he encountered the glare of her wild speaking eye. She wrung his hand ; she was known, Lord Clancarron beheld Eglantine ; beheld her living, beheld her he had long believed dead, and whom he was hastening after to the grave ; he beheld the beauteous ruin of her he had so loved, a beggar—Eglantine De Dunstanville a beggar !

He sunk down on the stones beside her ; he leaned his head on her cold bosom, pressed his burning lips to her colder cheek, and faintly uttering—"God!—Eglantine!"

Clancarron never spoke again ; he ex-

pired on that bosom on which he only wished to live ; for one moment his long abstracted soul swelled with the intensity of sudden feeling, it rushed in burning tumults through his wasted frame, and all concentrating in the object who broke on his appalled senses, the fine attenuated thread of worn out life gave way, and Clancarron ceased to suffer.



Eglantine, through the humanity of the servants, was taken care of that night ; to describe her feelings, is beyond human power. Lord Clancarron had gone out on a charitable visit, but finding his friend from home, he returned with the money

in his purse, which supplied the wants of Eglantine, and she returned to the only door that would open to give her entrance, and through a severe winter, it supplied their humble wants, and also supported the humane curate on the bed of death.

After he had left this world for a better, poor Eglantine, to support her own child, and the three orphans of him who had been her benefactor, took in fine work, and taught the children of the village to read and write, and in this humble obscurity, the once-admired Eglantine lived till her son had completed his eleventh year; his feelings, his principles, were all his mother's, the only inheritance she had to bequeath, and with these, the mind of Hildebrande was rich, proud, and dignified.

She had employed every hour of ease,

during the last days of her painful life, in writing the circumstances, which from felicity and honour had reduced her to penury and contempt, remorse, and unending sorrow.

“ When I am gone, when I am laid low under the turf that will cover my grave, do you, my child, my comfort, my last and only blessing, do you, I say, send these papers to Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville; I was disowned and reprobated, but I deserved reprobation; I sinned, and I have suffered. My child! my child! should my father ever vouchsafe to own you—and oh! the thought breaks on my soul like a ray from heaven,—*never disobey him!*—remember me, never disobey him!”

Her weeping child held her wasted hand while she spoke; his young heart swelled—he kneeled, and his innocent soul paid

his mother worship ; her cheek was now whitened and sunk—her eyes were glazed, and all the hues of animation were gone.

“ Beloved of my heart !” she resumed, “ beloved of your mother’s heart !” and her voice was weakening, and her breath failing while she spoke, “ I must leave you,—mine is a fearful way, and dark, very dark, my child, but angels are about me ;—I feel—I feel—mercy—father—father—father !”

The lips of her son were pressing her cold, cold brows ; his lips pressed a corpse ; she was gone ! was no more ! every sorrow had been sanctified, every passion purified, every thought resigned.

“ *She went in hope, and hope and fear in that dread hour, from ominous conscience spring, and err not in their boding.*”

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT Sir Geoffry's reflections were on this unexpected and interesting discovery, as they were never disclosed, neither can they be described; he could not banish from his thoughts, that the extraordinary boy in whose favour he was importuned, was the son of Fitz Ormond, who had wrecked many of his fondest and proudest hopes; neither could he forget he was the child, the orphan child, of a daughter once adored, who had been the pride of proud hours, and the hope of happy hours. See him as yet, he could not, but he empowered Mrs. Fortrose, most amply, to have him-educated, supplied, and attended in every way as became a descendant of Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville.

We need not follow the youth through his rapid improvements; at the age of sixteen, a prince might have gloried in such a representative, his dispositions were naturally noble, and his mind richly intelligent, and in the acquirement of intellectual knowledge, the cultivation of the graces had not been forgotten; there was something majestic and imposing in his figure, and his manners were dignified, yet tempered with gentleness, and every fine feature of his face bore the impression of a superior nature; yet we present not this our hero as faultless; his passions were high and impetuous; and he had a proud and unbending spirit, which the deeper he felt obligation, the more disinclined he became to wear its fetters. His mother's sufferings and death were ever present to his memory, and the dislike in

which a father who had adored that mother was held, swelled his tenacious bosom with many an indignant throb. He venerated his grandfather's character, and for his bounties, he was grateful; but not being admitted to his presence, while his cousin Jane was worshipped as an angel, inspired a sentiment very remote from affection for either, and to secure his confidence and interest his feelings, engage his tenderness and esteem, and to relieve a soul so proud, from the mortifying reflections restraint and dependence must feel in the presence of a benefactor, it was agreed that Jane should continue to pass as the daughter of Mrs. Fortrose, whose influence with his grandfather, had procured him the advantages he enjoyed from his liberality and kindness.

His vacations while at school and college, were generally spent either in London or Bath with them, where Jane's innocent and artless graces, her beauty and fine understanding, endearing manners, and delicate expressions of attachment, encouraged and sanctioned the ardent sentiment which she had inspired, and blended her image with every hope of bliss, and she shone on enraptured imagination as the angel of his future felicity.

It was Sir Geoffry's desire that he should make a tour of Europe, and Jane, accompanied by her friend, gave him the meeting in London, to take leave previous to his departure.

The cousins had maintained a regular correspondence, and had any thing like the truth glanced over the mind of Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, the conscious smile,

and strange laugh of Jane when he would read her own letters to herself, might have disclosed the secret.

He often told her she and his cousin seemed to have but one soul, and that he esteemed in the generous Jane, what he adored in his superior Mary.

Mrs. Fortrose, every way deserving the confidence reposed in her, had not concealed the mutual attachment from Sir Geoffry, and as he expressed no dissatisfaction, she was a pleased spectatress of the vows they plighted to each other before their separation, and anticipated much delight in beholding the developement of their romantic mystery; but the amiable woman was never more to behold her favourite Fitz Ormond; a very few months after his departure she bade farewell to the scenes of mortality; she expired in the

arms of Jane, and it was the first sorrow the gentle girl ever knew.

"How much Hildebrande will feel," said Jane, hanging on her grand-father's neck, "when he hears of my dear Mamma's death ; and when he returns"—tears fell on the hand which fondly encircled her.

"What would my child add ? What would she wish when he returns?"

"Poor Hildebrande — !"

"Poor !—Can he be poor with my Jane's regard ?"

"Oh ! if my regard might—!"

She stopped.

"Might—what, my darling ?"

"Make him," she cried clasping her hands, and looking innocently in her grandfather's face, "make him happy !"

"Is he then not happy, Jane ?"

She shook her head ; " He could be happier."

" Indeed ! How could he be happier ?"

" He would be *your son*, live with you."

Sir Geoffry smiled ; " My artless child ! He would be my son, live with me ?"

She hid her blushing face in his bosom.

" Is that all wanting to make him happy, quite happy, Jane ?"

Hildebrande had a powerful pleader in her bosom ; she had a powerful pleader in her grandfather's ; and Jane, before she left the arms so fondly encircling her, was commissioned *to think*, and then to write, what would make Hildebrande *quite happy*.

The throbings of Jane's heart now became sweetly calm ; and in anticipation, Jane was the happiest of the happy.

" *Ruin is most concealed from man when*

near," and as the lulling calm precedes the driving tempest, so fared it with our heroine.

Sir Geoffry was subject to the gout, and in a severe attack which confined him to bed, Jane had been his tender nurse, and never left him but when his solicitude forced her to take the air ; and one morning returning in haste lest her soft hand should be wanted, she heard shrieks issue from a cottage ; it was a scene of accumulated horror and wretchedness ; the mother of a family had just expired with the small pox ; the father lay ill at the time unable to move, and his wife's death causing his bitter cries, so terrified a little child fastened in his chair, that during the attendant's absence, he had fallen chair and all into the fire ; Jane's charity was active, as it was diffusive ; with a presence of mind

uncommon for her age, she snatched up the blazing infant and wrapped it in her own mantle ; it extinguished the fire, and having left pecuniary relief for the father and children, she hastened to the Abbey ; and finding her grandfather up and better, she related the melancholy adventure.

Paler grew the pale features of Sir Geoffry as she spoke ; terror gleamed in his sunken eyes, and, “ The small pox !” fell from his faltering ashy lips ; Jane had never had that loathsome disease, and her grandfather’s forebodings proved too true ; she fevored, and on the tenth day all hope was over ; her parent never left her pillow, despair sat on his brow, and distraction was in his looks ; the angel eye which had beamed with comfort on him, was now closed, and corruption covered every beauty. She lingered and suffered

long ; but she recovered, and was to the parent's heart more precious than ever ; her beauty seemed to have fallen a victim to the disease ; for her fine eyes were sunk in languor, every lovely feature was swoln, and the lily and the rose which had so beautifully blended in her animated face, were now lost in a coarse disgusting red ; her fine hair had been cut off, and she wore a close cap, which, with wasted arms and enfeebled form, altogether presented a woeful figure, for the late blooming and graceful heiress.

Jane recovered ; but fearful apprehension operating on an enfeebled frame had been too powerful for the doting grandfather ; he felt the approaches of death, and having given Jane leave to dispatch an express for her cousin, he summoned his lawyers, and, as we have related, by his will made Jane

sole arbitress of her own and cousin's destiny ; and it was to behold their mutual felicity, to behold the child of his son, and the child of his daughter united, that he wished the lamp of life to glimmer a little longer ; objects had become almost imperfect before Hildebrande's arrival ; but he heard his assent ; heard a sacred voice pronounce “ Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder,” and he died satisfied.

CHPTER XII.

THE funeral obsequies of Sir Geoffry having been performed with every possible solemnity and magnificence, and the household and tenantry put into mourning; with all the energy of her generous nature, Jane assured the assembled tenantry, that their interests and comforts would ever claim her consideration; adding, that when she gave them a landlord, it should be one whose virtues should render him worthy to represent her lamented grandfather.

The people necessary to be employed in erecting Sir Geoffry's tomb, received Jane's directions to remove the remains of her aunt, Mrs. Fitz Ormond, from the remote and obscure spot which enclosed them, and

to deposit them with her ancestors, and over these relics, rendered more dear and sacred, from having given existence to Hildebrande ; she ordered a plain black marble slab, inscribed, with the simple inscription—

Sacred to the Memory
of
EGLENTINE FITZ ORMOND,
Widow of Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, Esq.
And only Daughter of
Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville, Bart.

“ His mother’s dust now rests among us ; ” said the considerate Jane, as she dropped a tear on the sable stone ; “ rests with her ancestors, and will gratify — ”

A tumult of emotions gathered over her mind, and in deep reflective silence, she left the mausoleum, and returned to her now solitary and cheerless home.

Jane had always visited the families of merit and distinction in the vicinity of the Abbey, and on this occasion they had paid her every attention and kindness; and yet still Jane found her hours heavy, listless, and uninteresting; in her heart was the vacuum, her active beneficence wanted objects to engage and employ its warm affections.

She was one morning seated in pensive mood, contemplating the vanity of human expectations, and the insufficiency of wealth and human distinctions to insure felicity, or even her humble sister, content, when the old house steward entered with his weekly accounts.

"Your young ladyship," said honest Barnaby, after his own business was settled; "is but dullish as one may say, and

it might while away an hour or so, if you
—if you would please to see a——a——”

Barnaby hesitated before he added,
“ a lady who has lodged on the hill for
some time, but now wants to rent your
cottage on the forest border.”

“ You appeared to hesitate, Barnaby, as
to her being *a lady*; have you any doubts
about her?”

“ Not about her being a lady,” he re-
plied, “ for she is mild, and mannered,
and I have learned at the Abbey, *that is* to
be a lady; but then she does not dress
fine, nor yet live on the fat of the land,
as folks say, who are always busy about
others business, and idle about their own;
and, moreover, she is very good, for when
Gaffer Higgins’s hut was burnt down, she
took in the poor naked children, and

next week they were all like a flock of crows."

"How was that?" asked Jane.

"Why she clad them all from her own rigging."

"Then she is in mourning, Barnaby?"

"Yes, she is in black."

"You make distinctions, Barnaby?"

"Aye, your young ladyship, but I warrant me she has mourning at her heart, for Molly says she often finds her crying."

"Is she alone?" asked Jane.

"No, she had two daughters, very young and very pretty."

Jane determined she should have the cottage, and hoping, from Barnaby's description, that she might find a pleasing and rational companion for her solitary hours; she resolved to see her, and a few

hours after this, the ladies were seated together.

Mrs. Moreland had that pleasing exterior which recommends itself, and being one of those characters, that through a life of vicissitude, had nothing to conceal, Miss De Dunstanville soon learned that her new acquaintance was an officer's widow, who, after every honourable female exertion that a gentlewoman could make, was enduring the pressure of indigence, with five children ; her sons, indeed, were not altogether unpatronized, nor unprovided, for the eldest was private secretary to a great man, and the youngest studying for the bar, and during this period, the mother, on a plan of economy, had retired with her daughters, resolving, if opportunity offered, to make their talents contributary

to their support, for they excelled in music, painting, and fashionable needle works.

The widow's mind was cultivated and intelligent ; her understanding good, and her manners pleasing and interesting.— Such a personage, through the gloom of a long and dreary winter, and under Jane's circumstances, was considered a valuable acquisition, and though the border cottage was the widow's nominal home, the Abbey became her chief residence, and she herself the friend and confidante of the heiress.

Both the ladies possessed that temperament of soul which acquaintance soon ripens into intimacy and esteem, and they found, where sentiment and sympathy of thought prepare the way, it does not require long time to establish strict and lasting friendship.

Jane had communicated to her new friend the history of her love for Fitz Ormond, with all its relative, and attendant circumstances, adding, "that she only waited his taking possession of her voluntary gift of De Dunstanville, to retire to her *own* mansion, Sans Souci.

"Might I venture counsel in the form of opinion?" said Mrs. Moreland, with affectionate seriousness; "I should advise a very early developement of the whole mystery, and by conferring felicity, receive it; it courts your acceptance in its happiest forms; and believe me, my dear young lady, human life is too productive of evil for creatures of an hour to sport with happiness; when young, I myself was enthusiastic, and pictured out a beautiful perspective of improbabilities for the future; but oh! Miss De Dunstanville, be taught,

we must not carry romance into real life, it will render us a prey to the crafty and designing, expose us to the censure of the wise and discreet, and to the pity of the good ; and when we feel the general derision of the world, instead of the refuge of an unupbraiding mind within, our own reflections become our severest accusers.”

Jane listened with attention, though not with perfect conviction ; as the poor Mary Fortrose, she had attached and secured Fitz Ormond’s heart ; as the opulent heiress of De Dunstanville, she had been rejected, and the long cherished desire of proving the supremacy of love over gratitude, added to the new-born apprehension, that a set of features and complexion might have excited a passion without interesting his bosom, and the recollection that the supposed alteration of these features had

called forth bitter sarcasm and chilling scorn; she declared she "could neither marry a man who only loved her for a pretty face, or who would not prefer her in herself with competency, to one with empires; but we shall soon hear from Fitz Ormond explicitly, (she added) hear his sentiments and future intentions—he has a powerful advocate in my bosom, for, Oh! Mrs. Moreland, from the first moment I beheld him in his rags, his power has been irresistible, only wait, then, (and she took Mrs. Moreland's hand with a smile, which rendered *her* irresistible) only wait till we have his answer, and your superior judgment shall be my guide.

One morning that the sun broke forth with uncommon warmth and splendour for the season, Jane proposed a drive round the Park, and as Mrs. Moreland had a great

desire to visit the interior of the family mausoleum, the two ladies set out on their excursion, and notwithstanding that the ground was damp, neither being delicate enough to be afraid of a wet foot ; they left the carriage, and with sentiments of reverence, entered the hallowed sanctuary of death.

Jane had given the tribute of a fond and grateful tear at her beloved grandfather's tomb, and Mrs. Moreland was softly repeating Boëtius' reflection—

“ Blush to think that glory's plan,
“ Is bounded by the breath of man.”

When Jane exclaiming, “ Oh God ! What is this ? ” made her hasten to the spot, where she was standing, pale, and trembling, with an astonishment, not unblended with terror.

"Who is this? How came he here?" said she, staggering towards Mrs. Moreland as she approached, and pointing to a body prostrate on the earth; "What can he be?"

They raised a cold damp hand, it fell lifeless; "He is dead, quite dead!" said Jane.

"Perhaps not!" and Mrs. Moreland untied a shawl that bound his head, and threw some lavender in his face.

He now started—deeply groaned, and looking up, gazed wildly around him.

"He is not here!" cried he, in strange accents; "No, not here!" and a large full black eye glared over the tombs, as if seeking some one.

"This is no place to seek the living;" said Jane, "whom did you think—whom do you wish to see?"

"I seek none living—have none living,—yet once I was—was—but who are you? Speak—speak—who are you?"

"My name is Jane De Dunstanville; be more composed."

"Composed!" he repeated, and his uplifted eye fixed on the marble on which his cheek now rested; "all here are composed—here composure dwells; why am not I composed—why—whose tomb is that?" he cried, relapsing into wildness.

"My father and my mother lay there, and that which now supports you."

"Supports me!" he interrupted.

"That against which you lean, I would say, is Mrs. Fitz Ormond's, my aunts."

A convulsed smile passed over his ashy features —

"And the interior extending beyond this hallowed inclosure," Jane continued,

"contains the ancestors of De Dunstanville for many generations."

Jane hoped these explanations had satisfied him, and that he would rationally account for his appearance and curiosity, she therefore added, "But how should any thing here interest a stranger?"

He repeated, trembling violently, — "How, indeed, should any thing here interest a stranger? but I am an obtruder also, and with thanks, young lady, for your humanity, as I now feel recovered, I will take my leave."

He was meanly attired, and his appearance indicated poverty; Jane thought it sanctioned the offer of assistance; "You may be distant from home, Sir?" said she, in soft and respectful accents; "and far from your friends, and as you seem infirm, allow me, without offence, to offer

what will indeed be a pleasure if you accept."

The stranger was now on his feet, and though his habit was mean, a conscious superiority seemed to dignify his figure, and a proud energy to shine in his eyes."

"I do think," said he, thoughtfully, and bowing low, "that you would not offend?"

"Indeed, Sir, I would not," replied she, penetrated by his manner, and affected almost to tears; "pray, then, take this purse, and should your necessities ever want relief, do not forget that the heiress of De Dunstanville considers herself the responsible almoner of heaven, enabled by its bounty, to distribute comfort among the less affluent and happy sons and daughters of humanity."

He took the purse in silence, looked at

it a moment, and then put it in his bosom.

Jane bade him farewell, and motioned to retire.

“One moment stay,” said he detaining “her, in early life I knew Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville;” he paused—“in condition I was inferior; divided interest, separate wishes—but the destroying storm is at peace; the grave subdues resentments, levels distinctions, crushes enmities; every passion is now still, and I, the wreck of fate, the wreck of—but I can suffer no more—no—no—no—no more!”

Anguish was seated on his pale cheek, his eye gleamed sadly, and irrepressible agony shook his enfeebled frame. Again he grew calm, dejectedly calm, and in a voice tremulous from emotion, he cried, “Leave me, and allow me yet some moments *here*,”

"The place is cold and damp," said Jane more interested from his having known her grandfather, "and the scene melancholy, it may affect your health and spirits; be persuaded then, come to the abbey and take refreshment."

He looked in her face—the look was fearful; he took her hand, his own shook as if in deathly tremors.

"No child, no," and his voice was scarcely audible, "only tell me—I remember—I forget—was not—is not—" he could articulate no more, but wringing Jane's hand, and starting from her as if maddened by the horror of some sudden thought, he staggered from among the tombs, and was seen through the leafless trees, with quick and unequal steps, pursuing the path-way leading to the great road.

Jane and her friend returned to the abbey, meditating on the extraordinary appearance, and wild incoherent manner of the stranger. "Early circumstances seem to oppress and agonize his memory," said Mrs. Moreland, "it almost borders on mental derangement."

"Surely I have seen him some where," added Jane, "nay I have heard his voice; it vibrates on memory like my grandfather's; some mystery is certainly connected with his history, and appearance here, and his acceptance of the purse bespeaks him poor,"

"I am not of that opinion," said Mrs. Moreland, "he did not receive it with either the manner or humility of a mendicant; the eye of want would have sparkled at such a donation, I cannot help thinking also, that he looked for some name among

the dead which he could not find, or found one he did not expect ; but our conjectures are vain, time may develope what we cannot penetrate."

These observations brought the ladies to the abbey, where the cheering comfort of a blazing fire, was most acceptable to their aching feet, and benumbed fingers.

CHAPTER XIII.

JANE found several letters on her dressing table, which had arrived with the newspapers from London during her morning excursion ; one in an unknown hand, with a blazing coronet particularly attracted her notice, and while Mrs. Moreland looked over the papers she broke the seal and perused it.

“ *To Miss De Dunstanville.*

“ DEAR MADAM,

“ THE long estrangement of our families, instead of reconciling me and mine to the deprivation of your society, excites the most ardent desire to cultivate the honour, and let me add, happiness of

your friendship ; for report is loud in the praise of Miss De Dunstanville ; and I, in the name of my son, Lord Clancarron, and my daughter, Lady Florence, entreat you will kindly accept our best esteem.

“ Consider weare your nearest, and only existing relatives, and do our sincerity the justice to believe, that apprehension of awakening painful recollections in the lamented, and revered Sir Geoffry’s mind, alone suspended the pen, and kept us distant from his hospitable mansion ; indulge us then, my amiable, my estimable cousin, with your company the ensuing winter at Clancarron house ; it is spacious, commodious, and with perfect ease and convenience can accommodate you and suite, however numerous.

“ Lady Florence is all impatience to pay you a sister’s attention with a sister’s love ;

and my noble, my accomplished Clancarron—forgive a fond mother's praises in the voice of truth—he declares neither folly nor fashion shall tempt him from the contemplation of those virtues, which he hears the beautiful and graceful form of his cousin enshrines.

“ Oh, Madam, hasten to the heart, which longs to convince you how dear and warm an affection is now offered ; you are the nearest, the only relative of my ever lamented Lord, and as such, have a claim, with my own children, to maternal regard.

“ Your cousins unite in respectful love, with my dear and amiable Miss De Dunstanville,

“ Your sincerely affectionate,

“ And devoted Servant,

“ F. CLANCARRON.”

Surprise rather than pleasure filled Jane's artless bosom, on perusing such affectionate effusions from a stranger ; her understanding was too good to be pleased with the adulation, though the professions of regard, and the ardent wish for her acquaintance, could not but gratify her gentle nature, and excite in a heart warm, generous, and candid, emotions of gratitude ; added to these considerations, Jane had no disinclination to pleasure, and above all, Hildebrande Fitz Ormond was in London ; they might often meet, and the *denouement* of their tale could be more easily accomplished, and more pleasantly managed than at the abbey.

On some points she was, however, predetermined, among which were not to separate from Mrs. Moreland, on whose judgment and friendship she could confide,

and to have her own establishment. Jane needed no accommodation ; her fortune was immense, she had never been accustomed to controul or restriction from her grandfather, and could anticipate the pain if any were attempted by relatives ; she, therefore, resolved to decline making Lady Clancarron's residence her home ; but to be her own mistress, with Mrs. Moreland for her *chaperon* till under the happy and legal protection of her adored, and adoring Fitz Ormond.

" Our morning has been full of incident," said she, smiling ; " encountered a stranger, his wits bewildered ; returned nearly perished, find unexpected letters ; invitations to London ; journey proposed ; conquest santicipated ; positively, dear Mrs. Moreland, I shall be a heroine; my adventures are already beginning."

" You delight me with your gaiety," said her friend, " what an interesting correspondent I shall have ;" and continuing her vein of humour, " we shall assuredly publish the heiress and her country friend quite an appropriate and attractive title for your future adventures."

Jane suddenly looked grave, "*Friend!*" repeated she, with emphasis, "*would not* be very appropriate, if she could suffer an inexperienced young woman, under very peculiar circumstances, with feelings to regulate, perhaps, with passions to controul, to enter on the dangerous ocean of life alone, unprotected, and undirected ; will you, indeed, forsake me, desert me, when I need you most ?"

" Forsake you ! dearest Miss De Dunstanville, are these appropriate terms when you speak to one your friendship has

distinguished, and your beneficence obliged?"

"Oh poor me! at what a distance I am tossed!" cried Jane, penetrating her motives, "why I am thrown as far as De Dunstanville from London; and as for poor friendship, it freezes like a Lapland night."

"The distance between us is, indeed, immense," resumed Mrs. Moreland, "Miss De Dunstanville ought to have an introducer to life, of rank and consequence, one known, and approved; one graced with the distinctions of the world, and who could give distinction in the world. I am now, my amiable young friend, obscure and unknown; and though born and bred in superior life, its helplessness and a painful retrospection make the whole of my possessions; is this an introduction to scenes of fashion for the heiress

of De Dunstanville? No, I will be the faithful guardian of your interests and wishes *here*, pray for your felicity, and endeavour to promote it."

"All this sounds admirably well," replied Jane, playfully, "but sound it only is, for if Mrs. Moreland do not leave all her soberness, and humbleness, and littleness, and accompany the great heiress to the great wicked town of London, and take all the trouble in her household, tell her what to do, and not to do, what to say, and not to say, what to think, and not to think, and be her *own friend, her own mamma, her own every thing*, why naughty Jenny will be naughty Jenny, disappoint cousin Clancarron, disappoint the beaux, plague the fortune-hunters, please the fortune huntresses, and stay, and fret, and fidget, and fume, and foam,

and—and—and—do every thing that is wrong; except ceasing to love her own beloved Mrs. Moreland ;” and with these words her snowy arms encompassed the neck of a grateful friend, and great and happy is that fortune which can secure such a treasure ; more precious than the brightest gems that deck the glittering coronet ; it is the cordial drop thrown into the bitter cup of life by a bounteous Deity ; when it enters the sorrowing heart, sorrow is softened ; when it enters the happy heart, happiness is safe.

“ Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul,
Man owes thee more than man can ever pay.”

Jane returned a very respectful answer to Lady Clancarron’s letter ; assured her, she was grateful for her invitation, would be happy to deserve her friendship, consi-

dered her patronage a distinction, and the esteem of her family a high gratification; declined a residence *en famille*, as she had a maternal friend who honoured her with a parent's care and tenderness; but if her ladyship would engage a house, and condescend to give necessary orders, as to furniture, carriages, servants, &c. it would add an obligation to the many her kindness had already conferred.

Jane made every judicious arrangement for the comfort of her household at De Dunstanville, and accompanied by Mrs. Moreland and her daughters in a fine frosty morning towards the end of January, she quitted the lofty turrets of her ancestors, and set out for the metropolis. While they are pursuing their journey, we will more particularly introduce the Countess of Clancarron and her family.

The reader may not have forgotten that her ladyship previous to her marriage was a rich city heiress, who had sighed to exchange her father's bags for a coronet; the future pages of this history will be the best and most candid description of her nature and character, at present it will suffice to say, she was mother to a son and daughter; the son now inherited his father's dignities, and the daughter an independent fortune when of age.

' The countess herself might have been said hitherto to keep tolerably fair with the fashionable world; that is, she always paid her bills when she could no longer help doing it; it was declared a terrible bore; but as it would have been a worse bore to have had all the golden tripods, antique vases, classic draperies, &c. tumbled into barbarous confusion by the rude

knock-down blows of a vile broker's hammer, why Lady Clancarron's trades-people were sometimes paid; then her ladyship had very accommodating manners, and convenient ways and means of obliging friends; cards, rouge et noir, and faro tables, were always ready; they were very fascinating to *her friends*, and *brilliantly* productive to *her friends' friend*.

Satire and censure be still!—Do not other countesses the same?

Then if young pigeons with *golden plumage*, soft turtles with doting mates, did par hazard, fall in among the vultures, hawks, falcons, and other birds of prey, which infest the hemisphere of fashion, could the countess of Clancarron, or any other countess help, if the plumage of a pigeon glittered on the wing of a hawk, or the down of a turtle lined the pocket

of a falcon? No! No! Do not other countesses the same? Too surely yes; therefore, Lady Clancarron stood very well with the fashionable world, and as for any other world it never entered into the geography of her conscience.

Her son, her accomplished son, her house's hope, her family's pride, what was he not? He aimed at every thing, and was every thing—but what he ought to be; a buck, a blood, a boxer, and a whip; a petit maitre, a Listless, a fop, and a fool, all he alternately assumed; he could game, drink, and intrigue; kept running horses, sporting dogs, and dashing mistresses; he was a good whip, for he drove four in hand; a knowing one, for he always took the odds against Falcon; he was a sweet fellow, and a happy fellow with the ladies, for Miss

W——— would nod to him in the ring ; Lady B——— slap him with her whip in rotten row, and even the notorious Mrs. —— has been known to think, when *guineas were*, that Clancarron's guineas shone as brightly as even a Duke's guineas ; but to reach the grand climax of tonish notoriety, his gallant Lordship had once to pay damages ; but, to descend from these heights of celebrity, the Earl was rather vicious from example than the impulse of passion, and preferred being conspicuously wicked and ridiculous, than rational and consistent ; his understanding was weak, and altogether under his mother's dominion ; his figure was indifferent, and his countenance gave little promise of intellect. His courage was never doubted, because never tried ; and to those silly weaknesses, which the silly

ones of the earth term virtues, he was never known to yield; and we have now only further to observe, that, notwithstanding our peer's long minority, so dexterously had he and his boon companions played the game of dissipation, that again the old turrets of Clancarron tottered, and threatened to leave the earl without an acre.

The court, the city, and all Mamma's stratagems had failed in procuring him an heiress, and a convenient nervous disorder having much debilitated the countess, by the advice of the faculty, the family set out for Lisbon, with an intention of passing two years there.

In this fine climate, fine news reached them; the countess read in the English papers: "Lately died, universally regretted, the beneficent and equally beloved Sir

Geoffry De Dunstanville, Baronet ; bequeathing to his grand-daughter Jane, the immense fortune of twenty thousand pounds a year, besides a large accumulation of funded property."

The voice of fame added, "that the heiress being as rich in virtues and beauty as in possessions, she gave pleasing promise of supporting the honours of her ancient house with dignity, and rendering her wealth a general blessing."

And now probably the secret foldings of her ladyship's heart may be penetrated ; and without the gift of divination her purposes developed in hastening to England, and writing so kind an invitation to the heiress to visit London.

Lady Clancarron predetermined that her son should fall violently in love with his cousin at the first glance, and in

sincerity, and to do the young peer's passion strict justice, the first *coup d'œil* he mentally took of lands, hereditaments, leases, and all appurtenances to boot, sent a thrilling sensation through every fibre of his frame ; and while horses, dogs, cards, carriages, and mistresses, crowded tumultuously over his enraptured imagination, he exclaimed, "Paralyze me, Madam, but I see acres in her every look ; hear her guineas in every word ; and feel the ecstatic touch of her bank notes in every pressure of her lily hand."

While introducing this family of ton Lady Florence must not be forgotten, because she will make a considerable figure in these pages ; her appearance was fashionable, and her face would have been fine, but the pride, envy, and malign passions of a little mind, gave dark expression to

every feature; her feelings began where they ended, in self; to natural affections she was a stranger, and the gentle charities of life she never knew; her nature was composed of the darkest materials; meanness and cunning, malice and hypocrisy; the fiercer passions lurked in her heart ready to blaze forth on the slightest provocation; withering envy was in her breath, and detractive rancour sat upon her tongue; and never did this member of fashion feel so gratified as when put in possession of some slanderous tale, or calumniating fabrication, which her own malign invention could improve and enlarge, till the fair name and character were blasted by the destroying influence. She had vowed never to wed but with a title, and so great was her extravagance and attachment to gaming, that she was

always shamefully in arrears, and never had a guinea, either to gratify her own pleasures, or ease another's pains, even could her selfish heart have made the sacrifice.

CHAPTER XIV.

JANE's commission to the countess to engage her a house, and provide a proper establishment for her reception, was a most agreeable and most opportune office, as it not only gave her ladyship credit with Miss De Dunstanville's banker, but enabled her to make conditions, and certain arrangements with trades-people, who, on her return to the metropolis, would have been particularly troublesome and impatient ; few could manœuvre more judiciously than Lady Clancarron ; consequently it was no great wonder that the noble family had never appeared in the sphere of fashion with such brilliancy and eclat as it did this auspicious season ; and as her ladyship

had a deep and delicate game to play, the first sporter she threw out, was,—but in profound secrecy to some dear, dear friends, who were to communicate it, she knew, to their dear friends, who would just hint it again to their's, and so on till it took its circuit, gathering additions and improvements, and at length became the reigning topic of the day—it was, that the late worthy Sir Geoffry DeDunstanville, ever warmly attached to the Clancarron family, had expressed a dying wish for the closest and dearest alliance to unite the names and interests of the illustrious parties; but it was *wonderful* to Lady Clancarron—Yes, reader, her ladyship *looked* wonderstruck, how such secret and domestic arrangements *could* transpire; though one of her own emissaries had taken directions a few mornings before *from herself*, for para-

graphs to be inserted in various fashionable morning prints, "That it was more than *supposed* the domestic sphere of a certain northern countess would soon be illumined by a star, which, in conjunction with the lord ascendant of the house, would become a constellation, whose radiant fire, would set the whole system of the fashionable world in a blaze."

"The implication and application," said the countess, attempting to look dissatisfied as she spoke to a supposed dear friend, "they are both, my dear Lady Denham, too plain; and though in confidence to you, I acknowledge a possibility, and, indeed, as my young relation invests me with power, unrestricted power, to direct every thing, I might add probability, yet you can feel we do not like these matters anticipated by the world; the parties are both dear,

very dear to me, the thing, therefore, is desirable, and though I may wish for the young people being united, they shall act unbiassed by me, shall act as they please. Alas ! I knew the bliss of mutual love, of mutual confidence with my ever-lamented lord, and never will I interfere in the wishes of his beloved representative. Miss De Dunstanville is very amiable, and her ready acquiescence, with Sir Geoffry's desire certainly endears her ; but Clancarron has a heart, a proud heart, tenacious of its privileges and prerogatives, and *entre nous*, already frowns at the officious intermeddling paragraphist, who so presumptuously anticipate what a lady never thought of, and what he himself never may think of."

" Assuredly, my dear countess," cried Lady Denham, well penetrating the character she had to deal with, " you

must feel, so nice a discriminater as you must feel how presumptuous and premature such bold anticipations are, of what, his lordship justly observes, the young lady never thought of."

" But I did not tell you, she never thought of it ;" interrupted Lady Clancarron, provoked at the retort courteous from her dear friend.

" It would be superfluous, countess, quite superfluous to me ; for to let you into the secret committee of my confidantes, I can justify his lordship's assertion, that Miss De Dunstanville never, indeed, did think, and what is more positive and explicit, never will think of such an alliance ; and Lady Clancarron should glory in a son whose magnanimous soul can greatly determine to resign the pursuit of an heiress, whose bright appendages, it must

be owned, would be most convenient and accommodating to peers, who have a whimsical mania for horses and dogs ; cards and curricles ; wine and women ; with a long etcetera in the account current of a modern man of fashion.”

“ Really, Lady Denham’s humour is so infinitely agreeable this morning, and so full of point,” cried the fair Lady Florence, “ that it is almost barbarous to remind your ladyship, that West waits the final decision of your taste, whether Clancar-ron’s picture for our Jane is to represent him mounting his horse, or, like Hamlet, leaning on the earth at her feet.”

“ Not on the earth, for pity’s sake,” cried Lady Denham with a laugh provokingly satirical, “ not on earth, my dear friends, do not let him lean there, ‘ it is a spear, will pierce him to the heart,’ you

know all the rest, good morning, good morning!" and exit Lady Denham.

Gentle reader, and these were fashionable friends.

Lord Clancarron while glittering in that blaze of guineas, which often encircle the age of twenty-one, had declined the superlative honour, and vast felicity of Lady Caroline Denham's hand ; and, had more honour and feeling been his portion than fell to his lot, he had done right, for her heart, and something more than her heart, were in the possession of her own footman ; but then he was very handsome, and the world knew it not, and—" He who is robbed, not knowing that he is so, is not robbed at all ;" but Clancarron was wary, and Lady Caroline was disappointed.

Fashion was now rolling on in its highest tide, and the family of Clancarron

with its gayest pennants flying, were dashing along the stream. Each heart was beating with tumultuous hopes and improbable expectations, which the innocent, unconscious Jane was either to realize, or annihilate for ever. At length she arrived at the splendid residence prepared for her reception in Portman Square; and while she and Mrs. Moreland are occupied in making domestic arrangements, it may not prove uninteresting to look after Hildebrande Fitz Ormond.

It may be remembered there was an inexplicable charm in the manners of Jane, that had irresistibly operated on his feelings and senses, and attracted his heart ; and though the most extravagant flights of imagination could never have approached the reality, he quitted her presence in that whirl of thought, and confusion of wild

ideas, that it bore some similitude to a disordered brain, and by the time he reached London, he was in a delirious fever, which confined him for several weeks. At length youth, with a fine constitution, unimpaired by dissipated pleasure, triumphed over disease, and he recovered. His fevered imagination had become calm, the stormy emotions had subsided, and that reflection, which generally accompanies the languor of slow recovery, enabled him to compose the fluctuations of conflicting passions, while it in some degree tranquillized his mind to prepare for the future, and those vexations, which in one way or other are inseparable from the condition of human life. His mind now began to regain its accustomed energy; his understanding resumed its active powers, and he could calmly recollect; could separate and

arrange his ideas ; and his first rational resolve was, to seek out Mary Fortrose, and allow his interview with her to decide his future fate. He believed her finances very confined, and as Mrs. Fortrose had always proudly acknowledged herself dependent on Sir Geoffry's bounty, he judged the daughter's expectations must be very moderate indeed ; yet this nothing moved his firm devotion to her ; he felt he could be happier with her in the narrowest circle of human comfort, even if exertion and labour made up the deficiencies of fortune, than in the possession of De Dunstanville, without her participation in its felicities and luxuries ; added to these considerations, which he determined to point out to this sovereign disposer of his future destiny, with all the glowing energies of youthful passion, he

had, from the princely allowance of his late grandfather, and the munificent presents of his cousin, realized a sum which in the bosom of retirement, with frugality and economy, would not only supply the necessaries and comforts of domestic life, but many of its elegancies.

Hope now raised her fairy wand, and a brilliant perspective arose, with a long succession of gay hopes, and high unceasing delight rushed over his enraptured imagination, and in idea he beheld some sequestered spot imparadised by her angel presence and participation ; but poor Fitz Ormond found his gay airy fabric unsubstantial as the evanescent sun-beam in an April sky. All that followed was marked with disappointment, increasing perplexity, and a long train of evils, which his buoyant spirits had never calculated for

being in his catalogue of possibilities. Full, however, of his ideal plans, which strengthened by encouragement, were almost brightening into reality the moment he was able to walk, he set out for Park Lane, where the late Mrs. Fortrose had resided when in town.

With a trepidation equally experienced by the gay, as well as the gloomy anticipation of the future, he knocked at the well-remembered door ; it was answered by a footman, not in mourning, and in a strange livery.

“ Mrs. Fortrose,” stammered Fitz Ormond, and would have added I know is dead ;—“ but Miss Fortrose, is Miss Fortrose at home ?”

The fellow’s sneer, and abrupt interruption of “ Yes, the old one is dead, and the

young one, no body here knows where she is."

"Fellow!" cried Fitz Ormond, the anguish of unexpected disappointment adding irritation to impatience, "attend me to your master, to your mistress, to any one within."

His insolence now shrunk before Fitz Ormond's look, and with a fawning bow, he believed the butler, or house-keeper, might have received directions ; he would enquire ; and glad to escape himself, another, rather more civil, conducted him into a room where in a very few minutes the housekeeper made her appearance.

Bowing to the good dame, he intreated to know where he might find Miss Fortrose ? when she left the house ? with whom she went ? how she looked ? and, indeed, he made so many enquiries in such

quick succession, that poor dame notable was at a loss which she should answer first, to give the most satisfaction ; and with less prolixity than impatience generally meets on these occasions, she replied, “ that her master had hired the house from the late Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville’s solicitor ; that Miss Fortrose was very well, but took on sadly for Madam’s death, and that after the funeral she set off, she believed, for De Dunstanville abbey.”

“ De Dunstanville Abbey !” he repeated, starting with astonishment ; “ impossible.”

“ Is it ?” said his informer, and the uncertainty rendered him half mad.

“ Can—can you give me no farther information ? did she leave no message, no letter, no direction if any one enquired for her ?—if—if ”—he hesitated, and some

feeling like mortified pride, blended with the bitterness of disappointed expectation, held him silent, while the housekeeper, as if recollecting herself, added, “ Now, I remember, Sir, she did call before she left London, and bade me take care of all letters, particularly foreign letters ; so if you like to leave one, I will give it when she sends.”

The housekeeper had reason to say she was to take care of all letters, particularly foreign letters ; for when Sir Geoffry’s solicitor let the house, these directions were not only given in writing by Jane, who knew Fitz Ormond could only address her there, but to insure the performance of them, she added a piece of paper, which is found to have wonderful efficacy on these occasions ; yet this very prudent superintendent of the stores, with the

littleness of little minds, in order to enhance the value of her own services, affected indifference; but no sooner had her stratagem succeeded, and Fitz Ormond presented his douceur also, than she *perfectly recollect*ed the lady had been most particular in her orders, and promised to send regularly every week, which she had done. So if he pleased to write, she would take care of the letter, and send it the very first time her messenger called."

This intelligence rendered Fitz Ormond comparatively easy ; he trod again on air ; visions of bliss re-appeared, and as hope revived, it illumined the path of futurity, and discovered his Mary breaking through the mist of disappointment and absence, and meeting him with tenderness unalterable and unaltered as his own.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Fitz Ormond’s letter to Mary Fortrose.”

“ NEED I tell thee, worshipped Mary, how Fitz Ormond has felt, how he has mourned the days of separation ? A soul congenial and responsive to thine own, says—no—for the gentle heart thy fair bosom enshrines, beats with the soft, keen pulse now throbbing in mine.

“ Thy mother, *our* mother, my love, has thrown off the perishable wrappings of human life, and with her every holy grace improved, and with every virtue refined to perfection, has taken her seat in the abodes of the chosen ; she smiled on our guileless, guiltless passion ; she sanctioned our

innocent vows ; and her prayer blessed us as ONE.

" Mary, you need not be reminded. You know, you feel, you partake the hallowed passion, the sacred sentiment which your graces inspired, and which your virtues have sanctified ; it is pure, chaste, and holy ; it is worthy of Mary ; I could almost worship my own bosom as rendered sacred by enshrining thee and thy excellencies ; and with a soft association with thee, and in the sweet sanctuary of thy love, Fitz Ormond's nature will be perfected, and his felicity secured.

Only proud in having inspired you with a sentiment warm, tender, chaste, and lasting as my own, only ambitious to deserve and preserve a distinction which will be the glory of my life, you will acquit me of vanity and accept the confidence I

repose in your honour, simply as a proof that I will have no reserves, no concealments with my Mary.

My late grandfather, with an immense fortune, had bequeathed me a bride ; to a free and unengaged heart, unacquainted with the excellence of Mary, the conditions would have been glorious, for the virtues of Jane De Dunstanville are resplendant, and her generosity unexampled ; had a diadem, with the hand that held it, been offered to Mary, they had been rejected ; and do I not know, and have I not said, my heart beats responsive to the throbings of her own ? She will judge my decision, and now I claim, avowedly claim her plighted vows, proudly, fondly claim her innocent affections.

“ Jane De Dunstanville has relinquished my hand ; being made acquainted with

the state of my heart ; kindly, Oh ! how kindly relinquished it, and would have nobly given me the fortune, which the highly-deserved partiality of Sir Geoffry left solely in her own disposal ; to that the nature of Fitz Ormond could not bend ; no, beneficent and ever honoured Jane, your soul is too great, your nature too noble, too gentle ; you deserve the reverence of a world ; the pure unalienated undivided fervour of a whole heart ; ill would it suit thee and thy glowing feelings to meet the heartless homage of cold formal duty ; forbid it gracious guide of the heart, that such should be the chilling doom of a Jane's virtues !

“ Thy ample stores will suit thy ampler spirit, and to the gracious and diffusive distribution my heart with blessings leaves

thee, and I cling to my beloved one for more felicity than empires can bestow.

“ I know my Mary you are not rich, except in loveliness and worth ; but I have affluence ; and most grateful am I to Sir Geoffry’s munificence, which allowed me to save a few thousands, as they will now establish me in blessed retirement.

“ I have seen a cottage, with gardens, pleasure grounds, and some land ; a paradise, and you, my fairest, my betrothed, the smiling Eve whom I will welcome in our first father’s words to grace it.

“ Sole partner, and sole part of all those Joys, dearer thyself than all ; needs Must the power that made us, and for us this Paradise be infinitely good.—

—Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee Claim my other half—”

“ You will bless me with an immediate

answer ; consider the anxious hours I have numbered, Oh ! consider those I must still number, and let me fly to thy beloved sight ; I will be the guardian of thy innocent nights, and the guide of thy peaceful days ; affection shall smooth the pillow for thy repose, and my tenderness shield thee from all the inclemencies of fate ; my love shall sustain thee in sickness and in sorrow ; and when passing years shall whiten the ruby of thy lip, wither the rose now blooming on thy beauteous cheek, and bend that graceful form, still dear and sacred, loved and precious, will Mary be to Fitz Ormond ; her step feeble with age, will still be music to his ear, the face faded by time be charming in his eye, and the voice though sunken in its thrilling tones, vibrate on

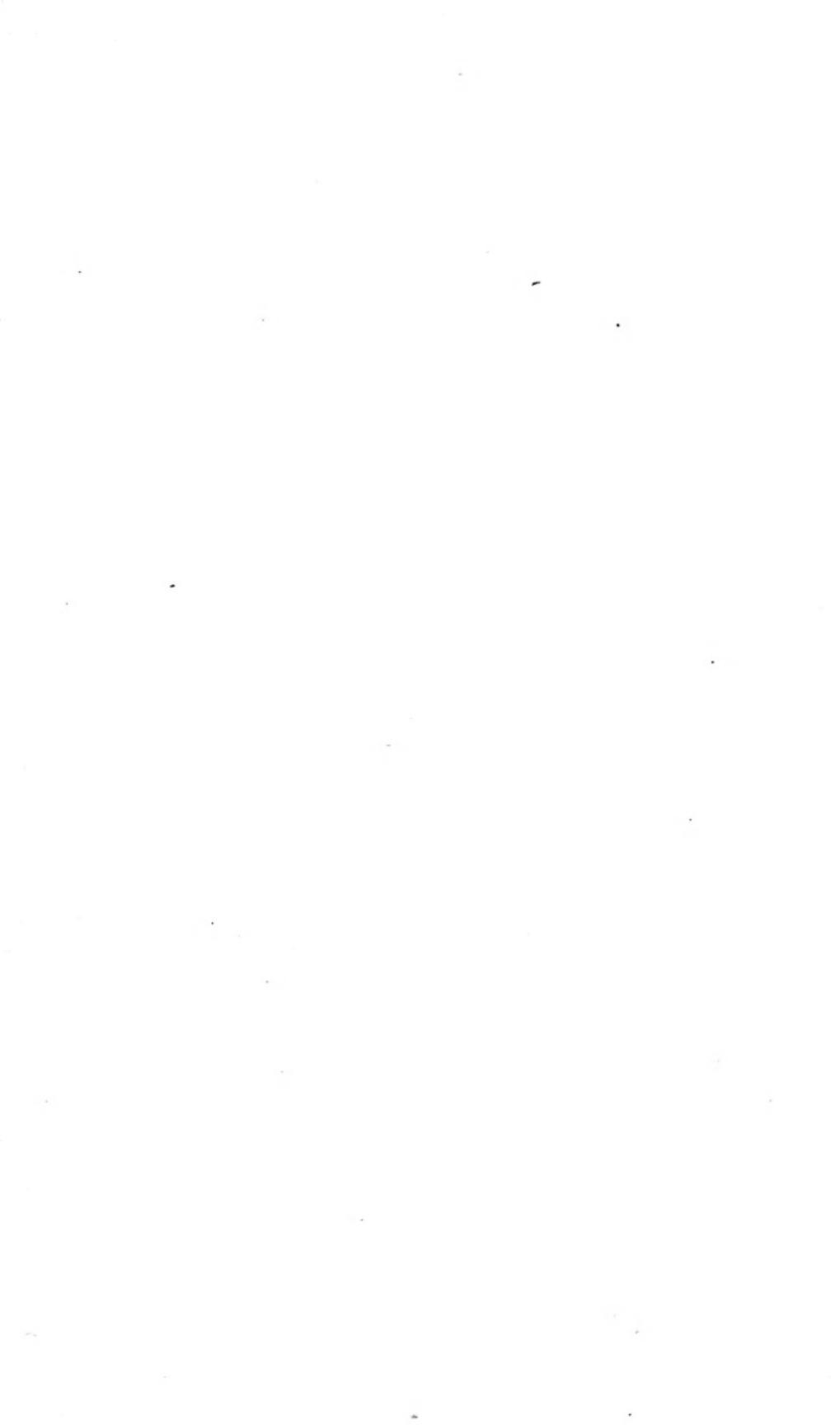
his constant heart like the songs of Seraphs.

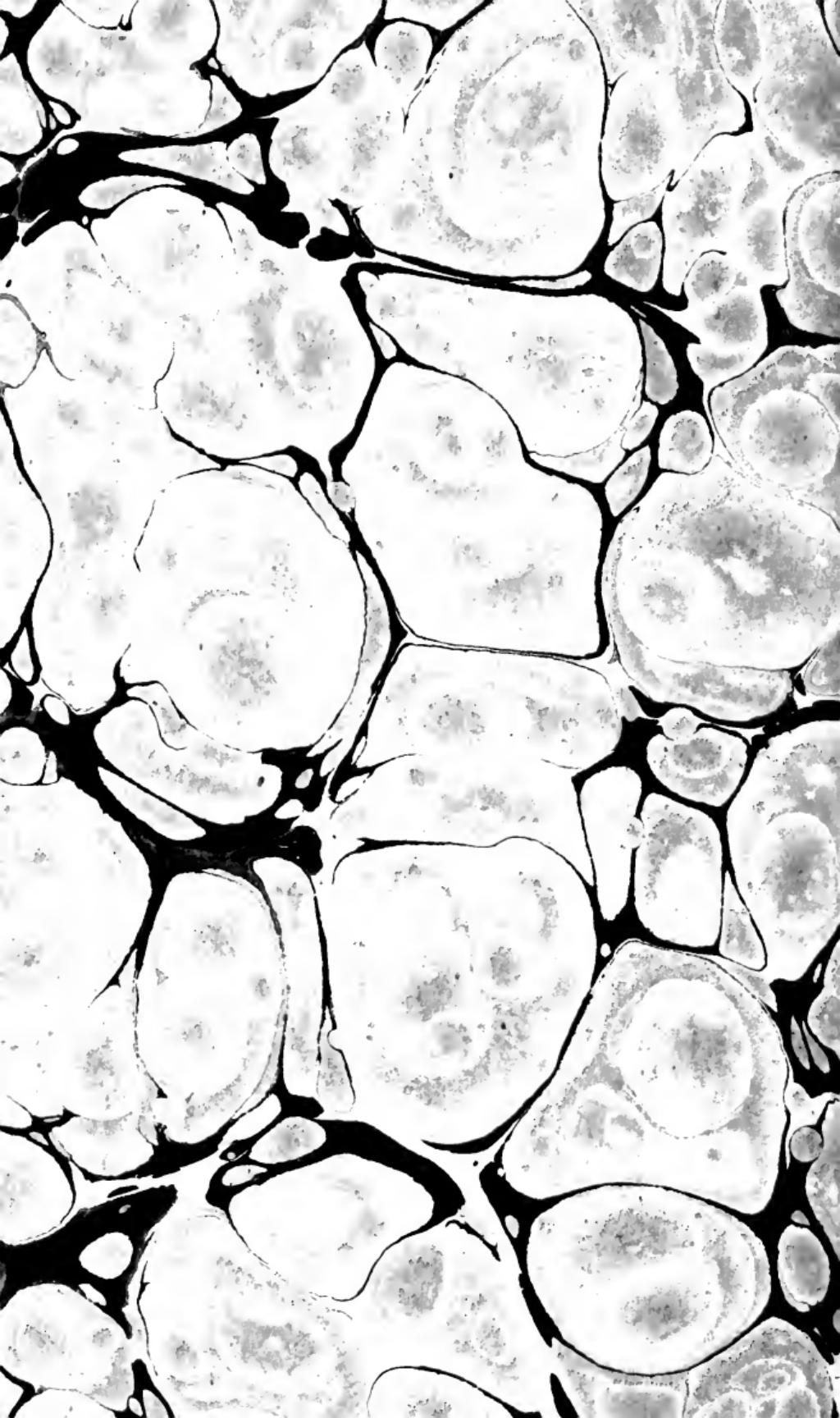
“ Spirits pure as thyself, be about thee, in all thy ways, and may the best of Beings bless thee with his blessing, prays my Mary’s

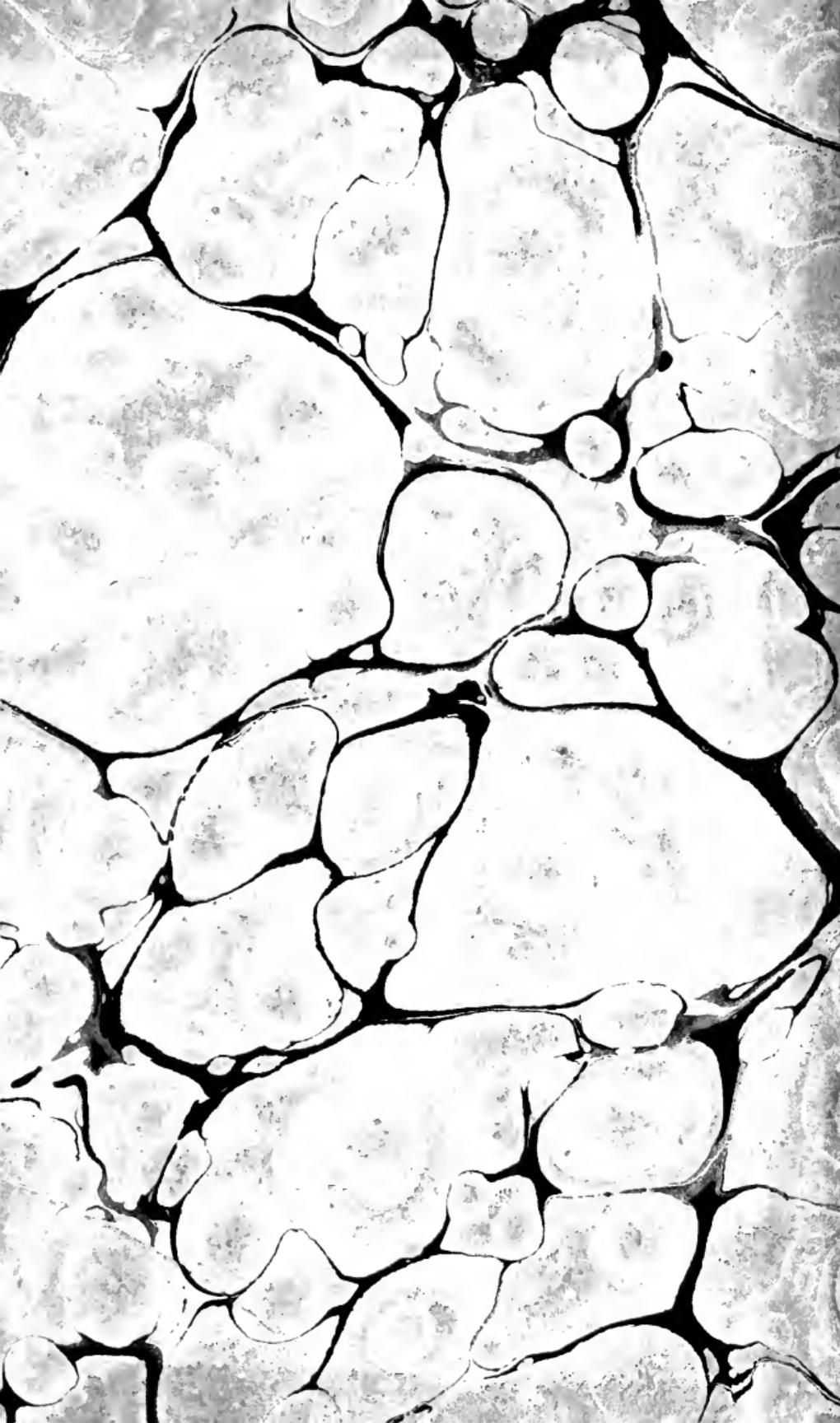
“ Own devoted,

“ HILDEBRANDE FITZ ORMOND.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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